



CUPCAKE  
WREATH



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NEW LOOK!

# Cupcake

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WINTER 2015



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Penguin  
cupcakes, p16

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WELCOME

# Cupcake

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### Welcome



It's amazing how quickly this time of year seems to come back round again, but it's definitely time to start thinking about your Christmas baking if you haven't already. For family gatherings, there are few better things to whip up than a batch of festive cupcakes, which not only taste great but look impressive too. This issue is packed with recipes that are perfect for just this purpose, the only difficulty will be deciding which ones to bake! I personally can't wait to

try making Britt Whyatt's beautiful cupcake wreath on page 14, and of course our penguin cover star is guaranteed to bring a smile to everyone's face.

Also this issue, we've got plenty of tips and techniques waiting to help you take your cupcake making skills to the next level. Discover how to create two different two-tone buttercream effects to decorate your cakes on page 100, and find out about the health benefits of chocolate on page 88 (I knew it had to be good for us really!). Plus couturier Debbie Wingham joins us once again to show how to incorporate fashion into our cupcakes on page 70, and this time it's a particularly fun bake involving the now very trendy Christmas jumper! You really don't want to miss it. I hope you enjoy the issue – please do get in touch to let us know what you think and send photos of all your cupcakes. I hope you have a fantastic Christmas and I'll see you in the new year!

Sally

**Sally FitzGerald** Senior Editor



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Penguin cupcake  
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### Subscribe

Turn to page 50 to take advantage of our very special offer to subscribe to *Food Heaven* and receive a free book.



### HIDDEN CENTRES

Want to try something new with your cupcakes? Find out how to perfect the art of surprise inside cupcakes on page 108.



### NEW TREND JUMPERS!

We all love to wear our festive jumpers on Christmas Day, so why not add them to your cupcakes too? Turn to page 70 now!



### Christmas

Find out the origins of all your favourite festive bakes on page 40.



### MUG CAKES

In need of a cupcake hit but nowhere near an oven? Don't despair, just try whipping up the microwave mug cakes on page 35.



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and gorgeous cupcakes in your own kitchen.

Occasions *pl*



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# Fresh from the oven...

Discover the latest news from the world of cupcakes and baking – including new products, tutorials, shows and more...

## Join Wallace and Gromit's Big Bake

If you enjoy using your baking skills for good causes, Wallace & Gromit Children's Charity is calling for passionate bakers to take part in its BIG Bake fundraising event. Taking place from 7-13 December 2015, the event aims to raise funds for sick children in hospitals and hospices across the UK. Nicola Masters, director of Wallace & Gromit Children's Charity comments, "We encourage everyone from the young to old, whether they are brand new to baking or seasoned professionals, to whip out their whisks and get baking this December to help raise funds." The campaign is being supported by 'Queen of Cakes' Fiona Cairns and TV baking star Iain Watters, plus Homepride Flour is backing the BIG Bake with nearly two million limited edition Homepride Flour packs, featuring Wallace and Gromit and details of the event, adorning the shelves of major supermarkets nationwide this autumn. To find out how to take part, go online to [wallaceandgromitcharity.org/event/wallace-gromits-big-bake](http://wallaceandgromitcharity.org/event/wallace-gromits-big-bake)



## All that sparkles

Christmas is the perfect time to add a little festive sparkle to your cupcakes, and the clever people at Rainbow Dust Colours have come up with an even better way to make your bakes stand out from the rest this year. Their new Edible Glitter mixes are made from colour combinations that work perfectly together. Should you want to create a children's movie themed cake, seasonal cakes or fantasy steampunk cakes, there are 10 new glitter combinations, ready-to-use, straight from the pot. The RRP is £3.25, and you can find out all you need to know at [www.rainbowdust.co.uk](http://www.rainbowdust.co.uk)



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## Stylish storage

The perfect Christmas gift for a fellow cupcake fan (or just a present to yourself!), we love this exclusive Carousel Cupcake Caddy from Lakeland. The three-tier caddy is perfect for storing and transporting cupcakes, plus each removable revolving tray has its own handle. There is plenty of space between each tier to allow for your frosting to be as tall as you like, or to cater for elaborate decorations, and the caddy can hold up to 24 cupcakes. Priced at £19.98, you can buy in store at Lakeland, or online at [www.lakeland.co.uk](http://www.lakeland.co.uk)





## The night before Christmas

Want to get the kids involved with your baking this Christmas? They won't be able to resist these new festive accessories from Cake Craft World. The Reindeer Cookie Set is priced at £5.15 and not only makes perfect cookies, but also can be used to create fantastic sugarpaste decorations to adorn cakes and cupcakes. For the perfect finishing touch, end with some Sugar Snowflake Sprinkles, priced at £2.30. Find out more

online at [www.cakecraftworld.co.uk](http://www.cakecraftworld.co.uk)



## Colourful cases

An easy way to make your cupcakes feel a little more special is to bake them in beautiful cases, and the new range from Dotcomgiftshop definitely fits the bill! Available in a range of patterns from Honey The Hedgehog to Mister Badger and a special Festive Family range, you should find something to suit most occasions. Prices range from £1.95 for a set of 50 cases to £5.95 for kits featuring cupcake cases and toppers. Get your colourful cases from the website at [www.dotcomgiftshop.com](http://www.dotcomgiftshop.com)



## Tea for two

Do you have a passion for afternoon tea? Now you can do it in retro style with the BB Afternoon Tea Bus Tour! You can enjoy a Parisian-inspired high tea while taking in London's iconic landmarks, including The London Eye, Big Ben, The Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey, Marble Arch and more, all from the comfort of a vintage London 1960 Routemaster bus. Your uniformed driver picks you up from Trafalgar Square to begin your 90 minute tour – you just sit back, eat, drink and enjoy! Costing from £45, they also offer gluten-free, vegetarian and Halal afternoon tea options. For more information, visit [www.bbbakery.co.uk](http://www.bbbakery.co.uk)

## The icing on the cake

Do you struggle to get the perfect consistency to your royal icing? Renshaw has the solution with its new ready to use Royal Icing. It's the perfect solution for bakers and decorators who see Royal Icing as too difficult and time consuming to make for themselves, but still want the wow factor that it can create on their cakes. From piping to covering, flooding and even fine detailing, Renshaw's Royal Icing is suitable for a range of different skills – so whether you're a novice tackling your first Christmas snow scene or a skilled cake artist wanting to save some time, you should check out this new addition to the Renshaw range. Priced at £2.49 for a 400g tub, buy yours online at [www.renshawbaking.com](http://www.renshawbaking.com)

## Hot new bake

Since cupcakes stormed onto the baking scene, many new baking trends have tried to surpass the mini cake treats in popularity, but few have come close. The latest contender comes in the form of doughnuts. Dum Dum Doughnuts caused a frenzy when they launched in late 2013, and have since become one of the most popular doughnut institutions in London and the UK. They specialize in artisan baked doughnut croissants and are made with only natural ingredients, and baked rather than fried, making them significantly lower in fat. If you'd like to try them and see if they can rival cupcakes in your affections, check out [dumdums.co.uk](http://dumdums.co.uk)

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# Occasions

CUPCAKES

50







## Mulled wine cupcakes

By Sarah Sibley from Bake With Sarah ([www.bakewithsarah.com](http://www.bakewithsarah.com))

Makes 12

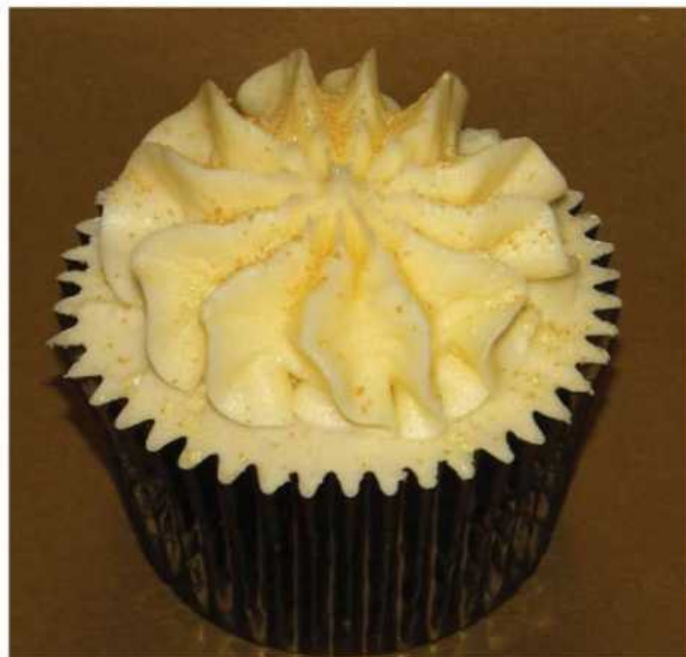
### FOR THE CUPCAKES

175g (6oz) soft butter  
175g (6oz) caster sugar  
3 medium free-range eggs  
200g (7oz) self-raising flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
2 tsp mixed spice  
½ tsp ground cinnamon  
2 tsp orange essence  
110ml (4fl oz) red wine

### FOR THE FROSTING

350g (12oz) fondant  
icing sugar  
100g (3½oz) unsalted  
butter (softened)  
a few drops of claret/  
red food colouring

- 1 Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3. Line a muffin tin with 12 large muffin-sized cupcake cases.
- 2 Cream together the butter and sugar until pale and creamy. Slowly add the beaten eggs. Add 75ml (2¾fl oz) of the wine and 1 tsp of the orange essence and mix well. Add the flour, baking powder, spice and cinnamon and mix thoroughly until smooth. Finally add a small amount of claret or red food colouring and mix thoroughly.
- 3 Carefully spoon the batter into the cases. Bake for around 25 minutes or until the sponge springs back when pressed lightly.
- 4 Remove from the tin and leave to cool on a wire rack.
- 5 Sift the icing sugar into a bowl. Add the remaining wine and orange essence, then add the softened butter and mix until creamy and lump free. If the frosting is not a dark enough colour, add a few drops of claret or red food colouring to get the desired shade.
- 6 Once the cakes are cool, pipe a swirl of frosting onto each cake.



## Mince pie brandy cupcakes

By Sarah Sibley from Bake With Sarah ([www.bakewithsarah.com](http://www.bakewithsarah.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

150g (5oz) soft butter  
175g (6oz) caster sugar  
3 medium free-range eggs  
175g (6oz) self-raising flour  
260g (9oz) mincemeat  
½ tsp mixed spice

### FOR THE TOPPING

300g (10½oz) icing sugar  
100g (3½oz) unsalted butter (softened)  
200g (7oz) brandy butter

- 1 Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3. Line a muffin tin with 12 large muffin-sized cupcake cases.
- 2 Cream together the butter and sugar until pale and creamy. Slowly add the beaten eggs. Add the flour and spice and mix thoroughly until smooth. Finally add the mincemeat and mix well.
- 3 Carefully spoon the batter into the cases. Bake for around 25 minutes or until the sponge springs back when pressed lightly.
- 4 Remove from the tin and leave to cool on a wire rack.
- 5 Mix together the butter and brandy butter, then add the icing sugar and mix together until creamy and lump free.
- 6 Once the cakes are cool, spread a thin layer of frosting over the top of each and finish by piping a large drop flower in the centre.





## Chocolate Christmas pudding cupcakes

By Sarah Sibley from Bake With Sarah ([www.bakewithsarah.com](http://www.bakewithsarah.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**175g (6oz) soft butter**

**175g (6oz) caster sugar**

**3 medium free-range eggs**

**2 tsp vanilla extract**

**125g (4½oz) self-raising flour**

**100g (3½oz) cocoa powder**

**250g (9oz) unsalted butter (softened)**

**500g (1lb 2oz) fondant icing sugar**

**200g (7oz) white sugarpaste**

**red and green food colourings**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3. Line a muffin tin with 12 large muffin-sized cupcake cases.
- 2 Cream together the butter and sugar until pale and fluffy.
- 3 Add the beaten eggs and 1 tsp vanilla and beat together. Add the flour and 50g (1¾oz) cocoa and mix thoroughly until smooth.
- 4 Spoon the batter evenly into the cases and bake for 25-30 minutes.
- 5 When baked, remove from the tin and leave to cool on a wire rack.
- 6 Cream the softened butter together with 1 tsp vanilla and then add the icing sugar and remaining cocoa, mixing together until creamy and lump free.
- 7 Once the cakes are cool, pipe or spoon a large blob of buttercream onto the middle of each cupcake.
- 8 Using a palette or butter knife, carefully spread the buttercream down and towards the edges of the cupcake, to create a dome shape. When you have a smooth dome, use a rounded modelling tool or the end of a spoon or paintbrush to gently make small dents all over the dome.
- 9 Take a piece of card and draw a splat shape and cut it out to use as a stencil for the white sugarpaste.
- 10 Roll out the white sugarpaste, place your card stencil on top and, using a craft knife, cut out 12 of the shapes. Brush a tiny bit of water or edible glue onto the shapes and carefully stick them on top of the buttercream domes.
- 11 Gather up the leftover sugarpaste and colour two-thirds of it green and the other third red.
- 12 Using a small holly leaf cutter or craft knife, cut out three leaves per cupcake from the green fondant and stick them in the middle of each cake with water or edible glue.
- 13 Finally, roll some tiny balls out of the red fondant and stick them in the middle of the leaves with water or edible glue.



## Cupcake wreath

By Britt Whyatt from She Who Bakes ([www.shewhobakes.co.uk](http://www.shewhobakes.co.uk))

Makes a wreath of 10 cupcakes

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**10 basic vanilla cupcakes (see page 113), baked in green cases**

### TO DECORATE

**1 kg (2lb 4oz) white sugarpaste**

**red modelling paste**

**white modelling paste**

**cornflour**

**green buttercream**

**royal icing in a piping bag**

**Christmas edible sprinkles**

### SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

**30cm (12in) drum**

**thin double-sided tape**

**15mm (½in) green ribbon**

**assorted Christmas moulds and cutters**

**large holly leaf cutter**

**foam**

**small rolling pin**

**piping bag with a 1J nozzle**

### FOR THE BOARD

- 1 Paint your board with water.
- 2 Knead your sugarpaste until it's a workable consistency. If the icing is sticky or your hands are very warm, sprinkle lightly with cornflour. Lightly dust your smooth work surface also to prevent it sticking.
- 3 Roll out your sugarpaste to a 5mm (¼in) thickness. If it helps, you can use icing spacers, which are perfect for this.
- 4 To keep the sugarpaste from sticking, lift and move it around as you roll. Add more cornflour if needed.
- 5 Gently lift the icing over a rolling pin to move and lower it onto the damp board and push down to secure. Cut around the board with a sharp knife to remove the excess icing. Apply double-sided tape to the outside rim of the board and stick on your brown ribbon.
- 6 To create a flat bow to attach to the front of the board, use a length of the ribbon (about 12cm (5in)) and fold in half to make a crease. On this creased line, stick two bits of double-sided sticky tape. Fold the halves in on themselves and stick a shorter piece of ribbon around the middle of your bow. Attach to your board with more double-sided sticky tape.

### FOR THE PASTE BOW

- 1 To create a bow out of modelling paste for the top of the wreath, cut four identical strips out of red modelling paste to your desired thickness. On two of the strips, cut a triangle to create the ends of the ribbon. Cut a smaller strip for the middle of the bow.
- 2 With a little edible glue, fold the plain strips in on themselves to create the bow loops. Glue the small strip in the centre.
- 3 For the strips you have cut for the ribbon ends, dry them on foam with a ripple in the icing to create a more fabric look. Do this by pinching the top and bottom together; you can also use a cel stick if it helps.
- 4 Leave the bow to dry upright to create prominent bow loops.

### FOR THE WREATH

- 1 Bake your desired flavour cupcakes in green cases. Make up some green buttercream and fill a large piping bag with an 1J nozzle.
- 2 Once the cupcakes have cooled, pipe onto them by starting in the middle of the cupcake and working your way slowly outwards. (I found I went round the cupcake two and a half times.) A gentle and even pressure is needed here.
- 3 Leave the buttercream to set slightly, so they are easier to move about. Position your cupcakes on your dried iced board. Once you are happy with the shape of your wreath, stick your cupcakes down with a little royal icing. You don't need to use a lot. It's just to secure them enough to transport the wreath.

### FOR THE DECORATIONS

- 1 Create assorted Christmas decorations using modelling paste, silicone moulds and a large holly leaf plunger cutter. Leave these to dry on foam and, once hard, paint as desired and use to decorate your wreath.
- 2 You can also top with sweets, such as mini candy canes and Christmas themed sprinkles.









## Penguin cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

12 cupcakes baked using the recipe on page 113

warmed jam

### TO DECORATE

white sugarpaste

black modelling paste

orange sugarpaste

edible glue

- 1 First bake 12 cupcakes using the recipe on page 113, or a recipe of your choice. Leave to cool.
- 2 Roll out the white sugarpaste on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar. Place a texture mat over the top and roll over to indent the pattern onto the sugarpaste. Cut out rounds using a circle cutter slightly smaller than the size of the cupcake, then attach to the tops of the cupcakes with warmed jam. Set aside.
- 3 Now it's time to make the penguins. Form 12 large balls and 12 smaller balls from the black modelling paste. Shape the larger balls in your hands so they're not a perfect round, but have a few curves for the body. Attach the heads to the bodies with edible glue. Form 24 flattened oblongs from the black paste, thin one end of each slightly, and curve the opposite end into a slight flick. Attach the thinned ends to the tops of the penguin bodies for the wings.
- 4 Roll out a little more white sugarpaste and cut out 12 teardrop shapes. Attach to the bodies with edible glue.
- 5 Roll 24 tiny balls of white sugarpaste for the eyes, attach a dot of black paste for the centres and attach to the faces.
- 6 Form 12 beak shapes from the orange sugarpaste and use a knife to make a slight slit in the centre so you can create the open beak. Stick to the head with glue.
- 7 Finally, roll out the remaining orange sugarpaste, then cut out 12 pairs of feet. Indent some markings and bend the top of one of the feet upwards. Attach to the centre of the cupcakes, then stick the bodies in place with edible glue.



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## Snowman cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 225g (8oz) plain flour
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- a pinch of salt
- 1 free-range egg, beaten
- 150ml (5fl oz) milk
- 50ml (1¾fl oz) sunflower oil
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

### FOR THE ICING

- 200g (7oz) icing sugar
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- water

### TO DECORATE

- 180g (6oz) blue sugarpaste
- icing sugar
- 450g (16oz) white sugarpaste
- red food colouring
- yellow food colouring
- black food colouring
- 1 tube of black piping icing
- 1 tube of brown piping icing
- sparkling sugar crystals

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Sift the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt into a mixing bowl.
- 3 Whisk together the egg, milk, oil and vanilla. Stir into the dry ingredients until combined.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl and stir in the lemon juice until smooth. Beat in enough water to produce a thick coating consistency. Spread the icing on the cakes.
- 6 To decorate, roll out the blue sugarpaste on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar.
- 7 Cut out six rounds the same diameter as the cake, then cut each round in half. Place on the cakes, as shown, before the icing sets.
- 8 Set aside a little white sugarpaste for the noses, scarves and hats.
- 9 Roll 36 balls of white sugarpaste, 12 each of three different sizes for the snowmen heads and bodies – 3 balls for each cake.
- 10 Attach to the cakes with a dab of icing.
- 11 Divide the remaining sugarpaste into one large piece, one medium piece and a small piece.
- 12 Knead red food colouring into the medium sized piece and roll into small thin 'sausages' for the scarves. Attach with a dab of icing.
- 13 Knead yellow food colouring into the smallest portion and shape 12 small noses. Attach with a dab of icing.
- 14 Knead black colouring into the largest piece and shape into 12 hats. Attach to the heads with a dab of icing.
- 15 Paint the eyes, mouths and buttons with black piping icing.
- 16 Pipe the brown icing into twig shapes for the arms.
- 17 Sprinkle with sugar crystals and leave to dry.





Recipe and photography © Stockfood

## Caramel apple cupcakes

*Makes 12 cupcakes*

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**225g (8oz) plain flour**

**2 tsp baking powder**

**110g (4oz) sugar**

**2 free-range eggs**

**100ml (3½fl oz) sunflower oil**

**225ml (8fl oz) milk**

### FOR THE CARAMEL BUTTERCREAM

**110g (4oz) sugar**

**2 tbsp water**

**a pinch of salt**

**400ml (14fl oz) whipping cream**

### TO DECORATE

**1½ tbsp butter**

**2 eating apples, peeled, cored and thickly sliced**

**2 tbsp sugar**

**2-3 tbsp water**

**ground cinnamon**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Sift the flour and baking powder into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar. Whisk together the eggs and oil in a separate bowl until frothy, then slowly whisk in the milk. Stir into the dry ingredients until just blended. The mixture will be slightly lumpy.
- 3** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4** For the caramel buttercream, heat the sugar, water and salt in a pan over a medium heat, stirring once, until the sugar is dissolved. Continue cooking, but do not stir, until the sugar turns golden amber. Remove from the heat.
- 5** Slowly pour the cream into the pan – it will splutter. Heat gently, stirring until combined. Pour into a mixing bowl and leave to cool. Chill for about 40 minutes until cold, stirring occasionally.
- 6** Whisk the caramel cream until thick.
- 7** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls on top of the cakes.
- 8** To decorate, melt the butter in a frying pan, add sliced apples and cook for 2-3 minutes to soften. Add the sugar and water and stir over a medium heat, until the apples are soft and the liquid has evaporated. Set aside to cool.
- 9** Dice the cooled apples. Sprinkle the diced apples over the top of the cakes and sprinkle with ground cinnamon.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

## Reindeer cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 200g (7oz) plain flour
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 110g (4oz) sugar
- 2 free-range eggs
- 100ml (3½fl oz) sunflower oil
- 225ml (8fl oz) milk
- 85g (3oz) chocolate chips

### FOR THE FROSTING

- 130g (4½oz) chopped plain chocolate
- 150g (5oz) butter
- 160g (6oz) icing sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- milk

### TO DECORATE

- 24 round white mint sweets
- 1 stick of liquorice, cut into 24 tiny pieces
- 12 chocolate coated pretzels, broken in half
- 12 red jellybeans
- 12 red gummy sweets

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Sift the flour, cocoa and baking powder into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar. Whisk together the eggs and oil in a separate bowl until frothy, then slowly whisk in the milk. Stir into the dry ingredients until just blended. Stir in the chocolate chips.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tins for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool.
- 4 For the chocolate frosting, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly.
- 5 Beat the butter in a bowl until soft, then gradually sift in the icing sugar. Beat well until smooth.
- 6 Add the vanilla and stir in the melted chocolate until smooth (add a few drops of milk if the mixture is too stiff).
- 7 Spread the chocolate frosting on top of the cakes.
- 8 To decorate, place two mints on each cake for the eyes and attach a piece of liquorice to each with a dab of buttercream.
- 9 Insert the pretzel halves for the ears and place a red jellybean on each cake for the nose. Add the red gummy sweets for the mouths.



# Christmas cupcakes with fondant trees

Makes 24

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

75g (2½oz) butter

75g (2½oz) caster sugar

2 free-range eggs, beaten

½ tsp almond extract

75g (2½oz) self-raising flour

75g (2½oz) glacé cherries, finely chopped

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

55g (2oz) unsalted butter

100ml (3½fl oz) whipping cream

½ tsp vanilla extract

350g (12oz) icing sugar

red food colouring

yellow food colouring

## FOR THE CHRISTMAS TREES

300g (11oz) green sugarpaste

cornflour

edible coloured baubles

1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in 24-hole mini muffin tin.

2 Beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Gradually add the eggs, a little at a time, and beat well.

3 Sift in the flour and gently fold into the mixture. Stir in the almond extract and cherries.

4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 12-15 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool.

5 For the buttercream, beat the butter until soft and creamy. Beat in the cream and vanilla until blended.

6 Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Put half the mixture into another bowl and add a few drops of red food colouring and beat well.

7 Beat the yellow colouring into the remaining half of the buttercream.

8 Spoon both buttercreams, side by side, into a piping bag with a shell nozzle, so that the colours sit evenly next to each other inside the bag.

9 Pipe a generous swirl onto each cake.

10 For the Christmas trees, roll 24 small balls of sugarpaste and pinch and roll each into a cone shape. Flatten the bases with your fingers.

11 Dip a small pair of scissors in cornflour and snip into the cones to create the layered foliage effect.

12 Attach the coloured balls with a dab of water and leave to dry before placing on the cakes.





## Chocolate cupcakes with candy canes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 100g (3½oz) plain chocolate, grated
- 100g (3½oz) butter
- 75g (2½oz) sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- a pinch of salt
- 1 free-range egg
- 200g (7oz) plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tbspcocoa powder
- 100ml (3½fl oz) milk

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 55g (2oz) plain chocolate
- 200g (7oz) unsalted butter
- 350g (12oz) icing sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

- 200g (7oz) white sugarpaste
- 200g (7oz) red sugarpaste
- 100g (3½oz) green sugarpaste
- icing sugar

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 24-hole mini muffin tin with paper cases.
- 2 Beat together the chocolate and butter in a mixing bowl until soft and creamy.
- 3 Gradually beat in the sugar, vanilla and salt until smooth.
- 4 Beat in the egg until incorporated. Gradually sift in the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and cocoa and fold in gently, alternating with the milk, until well blended.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 15 minutes, until springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the buttercream, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat.
- 7 Beat the butter until soft. Sift in the icing sugar and beat well until smooth and creamy. Stir in the vanilla and melted chocolate. Beat well until blended. Leave to cool and thicken, but not set.
- 8 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls on top of the cupcakes.
- 9 To decorate, take a walnut-sized ball of both white and red sugarpastes and apply even pressure to roll the sugarpastes into long ropes of approximately 5mm (¼in) diameter.
- 10 Pinch the two sugarpaste ropes together and gently twist them, being careful not to twist them too tightly or they will break.
- 11 Gently push down on the twisted sugarpaste and roll together to form a single rope. Cut into 24 equal lengths and curve the tops for the candy cane shape. Place on top of the cakes.
- 12 Roll out the green sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar and cut out 48 small holly leaves with a cutter or card template. Place on the cakes.





## Ginger cream cupcakes with gingerbread men

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

175g (6oz) butter  
175g (6oz) sugar  
3 free-range eggs, beaten  
4 tbsp golden syrup  
225g (8oz) self-raising flour  
2 tsp ground ginger  
1½ tbsp ground almonds  
1-2 tbsp milk

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

112g (4oz) unsalted butter  
250g (9oz) icing sugar  
2 tsp ground ginger  
**TO DECORATE**  
250g (9oz) brown sugarpaste  
icing sugar  
brown food colouring  
red food colouring

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until soft and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs. Stir in the golden syrup. Sift in the flour and ground ginger and gently stir until combined. Stir in the ground almonds and milk until smooth.
- 3 Spoon the mixture into the paper cases and bake for 20 minutes until they are golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the ginger buttercream, beat the butter in a bowl until soft. Sift in the icing sugar and ginger and beat well. Spoon into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe onto the top of the cakes.
- 5 To decorate, roll out the sugarpaste on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar and cut out 12 small gingerbread men shapes with a cutter or card template.
- 6 Using a small plain piping tube, make indentations for the eyes, mouth and buttons. Paint the feet with brown food colouring, using a fine brush. Paint the ends of the arms with red food colouring. Leave to dry, then place on top of the cakes.



## Simple Santa cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

150g (5oz) butter  
3 free-range eggs  
150g (5oz) icing sugar  
110g (4oz) self-raising flour  
50g (1¾oz) ground almonds  
½ tsp almond extract  
**FOR THE FROSTING**  
4 free-range egg whites  
225g (8oz) sugar

110ml (4fl oz) golden syrup

4 tbsp water  
1 tbsp vanilla extract  
a pinch of salt

### TO DECORATE

225g (8oz) white marzipan  
24 chocolate chips  
pink food colouring  
6 large strawberries, halved  
6 glacé cherries, halved

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat together the butter, eggs and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Stir in the flour, almonds and extract until blended.
- 3 Spoon into the cases and bake for 15 minutes until golden. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the frosting, combine all the ingredients in a large heatproof bowl set over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water.
- 5 Whisk with an electric whisk at high speed for 7-10 minutes, until the frosting is thick and fluffy. Remove from the heat and continue to whisk until slightly cooled. Spread the cakes with frosting and spoon the remaining frosting into a piping bag.
- 6 Roll 12 balls of white marzipan and place on the cakes. Press two chocolate chips into the balls for eyes. Attach a cherry half to each ball with a dab of frosting for noses. Attach a strawberry half on each ball for hats. Pipe frosting at the base of the balls for beards, around the bases of the strawberries and on top of the hats. Pipe two small thick rounds on the balls for the cheeks. Leave to dry.
- 7 Paint the cheeks with pink colouring and leave to dry.





Recipe © Stockfood, photography © iStock Photo

## Santa's helper cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**12 cupcakes of your choice (see basic recipe on page 113)**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**buttercream**

### TO DECORATE

**icing sugar**

**300-400g (11-14oz) ivory sugarpaste**

**200g (7oz) green sugarpaste**

**200g (7oz) red sugarpaste**

**55g (2oz) white sugarpaste**

**24 black sugar coated pastilles**

**pink food colouring**

**brown food colouring**

- 1** Bake 12 cupcakes of your choice. Spread a layer of buttercream on the cakes.
- 2** To decorate, roll out the ivory sugarpaste thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out rounds, the same diameter as the cakes.
- 3** Press the sugarpaste rounds on the topping.
- 4** Roll 12 small balls for the noses and 24 balls for the ears. Attach the noses to the centre of the cakes with a dab of water.
- 5** Flatten the balls for the ears and press into cone shapes. Make an indentation in each with a wooden spoon handle and attach the ears with a dab of water.
- 6** Roll out green sugarpaste as before and cut out rounds using the same cutter as before. Cut 12 strips for the hats. Curve them and lightly brush with water and arrange them at the top of the cakes.
- 7** Roll out the red sugarpaste as before and cut out 12 strips, using a scalloped or crimped edge cutter, for the hatbands. Brush with water and attach to the hats.
- 8** Roll 12 small balls of red sugarpaste and attach to the hats with a dab of water. Roll out the white sugarpaste and cut out 24 tiny discs for the eyes. Attach with a dab of water.
- 9** Press a pastille into each eye and attach a dot of white sugarpaste with a little water.
- 10** Mark the mouth with a cocktail stick and make an indentation at either side with a paintbrush handle. Paint pink colouring on the cheeks. Add dots of brown using a fine brush and leave to dry.

# Christmas tree tower cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

225g (8oz) plain flour

90g (3oz) caster sugar

2 tsp baking powder

a pinch of salt

1 free-range egg, beaten

150ml (5fl oz) milk

50ml (1¾fl oz) sunflower oil

1 tsp vanilla extract

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

140g (5oz) unsalted butter

350g (12oz) icing sugar

140ml (5fl oz) crème fraîche

## FOR THE CHRISTMAS TREES

175ml (6fl oz) warm water

a few drops of vanilla extract

5 tbsp meringue powder

1 tsp cream of tartar

2.25kg (5lb) icing sugar, plus  
extra for dusting

110g (4oz) white sugarpaste

12 mini ice cream cones

green food colouring

edible baubles

sparkling sugar

1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.

2 Sift the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt into a mixing bowl.

3 Whisk together the egg, milk, oil and vanilla. Stir into the dry ingredients until combined.

4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.

5 For the buttercream, beat the butter until soft and creamy. Sift in the icing sugar alternately with the crème fraîche and beat well until thick and creamy.

6 Spoon into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe on top of the cakes.

7 For the trees, whisk together the warm water, vanilla and meringue powder until frothy and thickened. Add the cream of tartar and mix for 30 seconds. Add all the icing sugar at once and whisk on low speed with an electric whisk for 10 minutes until thick and creamy.

8 Add green food colouring and mix well. Spoon into a piping bag with a star nozzle.

9 Invert a cone on top of a cupcake.

10 Pipe a line of green buttercream around the base of a cone. Continue piping in rows all the way up to the top of the ice cream cone. Decorate with baubles and leave to set.

11 Repeat with the remaining buttercream and cones.

12 Sprinkle the trees with sparkling sugar.

13 Roll out the white sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar and cut out 12 stars.

14 Carefully place the stars on the trees.





## Santa cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

85g (3oz) almonds, finely chopped

150g (5oz) caster sugar

150g (5oz) soft butter

2 free-range eggs

150g (5oz) self-raising flour

5 tbsp milk

### FOR THE TOPPING

9 tbsp unsalted butter

150g (5oz) icing sugar

300g (11oz) marshmallow fluff

1 tsp vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

icing sugar

200g (7oz) ivory sugarpaste

170g (6oz) red sugarpaste

100g (3½oz) white sugarpaste

50g (1½oz) green sugarpaste

1 tube of black piping icing, or gel

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat together the almonds, sugar, butter, eggs, flour and milk in a mixing bowl until smooth.
- 3 Spoon the mixture into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the topping, beat the butter until soft and creamy. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Beat in the marshmallow fluff and vanilla until well blended.
- 5 Spread some of the topping roughly over the cakes to resemble snow. Put the remainder into a piping bag.
- 6 To decorate, roll out the ivory sugarpaste on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar and cut out 12 small discs for the faces. Press onto the cakes.
- 7 Roll the trimmings into 12 small balls for the noses. Attach to the faces with a dab of water.
- 8 Roll out the white sugarpaste on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar and cut out 12 strips for the hatbands. Roll 12 small balls for the hat bobbles.
- 9 Shape 12 pieces of red sugarpaste into hats and place above the faces. Roll about 36 tiny balls for the holly berries.
- 10 Brush the white sugarpaste strips with water and attach to the hats, to hide the join between the faces and hats.
- 11 Attach the bobbles to the ends of the hats with a dab of water.
- 12 Roll out the green sugarpaste on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar and cut out tiny holly leaves. Attach the leaves and berries to the hats with a dab of water.
- 13 Pipe the beards around the faces with the reserved topping.
- 14 Pipe eyes on the faces with piping icing or gel and leave to dry.





## Red berry cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 125g (4½oz) plain chocolate**
- 110g (4oz) unsalted butter**
- 175g (6oz) dark brown sugar**
- 2 large free-range eggs**
- 75g (2½oz) plain flour**
- a pinch of salt**

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 300ml (1 fl oz) double cream**
- 50g (1½oz) icing sugar**

### TO DECORATE

- redcurrants**
- raspberries**
- halved strawberries**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 24-hole mini muffin tin.
- 2** Melt the chocolate and butter together in a pan over a low heat. Remove from the heat.
- 3** Stir in the sugar, then the eggs one by one. Sift in the flour and salt and fold in gently until just combined.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 10-12 minutes until firm to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the topping, whisk together the double cream and icing sugar until thick.
- 6** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on top of each cake. Decorate with redcurrants, raspberries and strawberries.



## Cinnamon chai cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 chai teabag**
- 55ml (2 fl oz) milk**
- 125g (4½oz) sugar**
- 125g (4½oz) butter**
- 2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten**
- 125g (4½oz) plain flour**
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon**

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 125g (4½oz) unsalted butter**
- 250g (9oz) icing sugar**
- TO DECORATE**
- ground cinnamon**
- almonds, finely chopped**

- 1** For the cupcakes, gently heat the milk. Add the teabag, cover and leave to infuse for 20 minutes. Remove the teabag and leave the milk to cool to room temperature.
- 2** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 3** Beat together the sugar and butter in a mixing bowl until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs until blended. Add half the infused milk and beat well. Stir in the flour and cinnamon.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 15-20 minutes until firm to the touch and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the buttercream, beat the butter until very soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar and beat well. Add the remaining milk and beat well.
- 6** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe on the cakes.
- 7** Sprinkle with ground cinnamon and chopped almonds.







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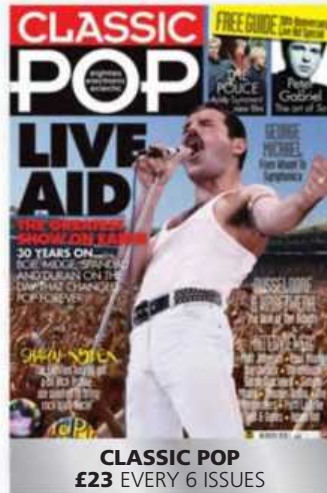
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## Thanksgiving cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150ml (5fl oz) honey
- 100g (3½oz) dark brown sugar
- 85g (3oz) butter
- 3 tbsp milk
- 250g (9oz) plain flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten

### FOR THE ICING

- 225g (8oz) icing sugar
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder
- 25g (1oz) sugar
- 3 tbsp water

### TO DECORATE

- 250g (9oz) chocolate sugarpaste
- icing sugar
- 120g (4oz) orange sugarpaste
- 120g (4oz) red sugarpaste
- 120g (4oz) yellow sugarpaste
- edible glue
- 24 small white sweets
- 55g (2oz) white sugarpaste
- 24 mini chocolate chips
- grey food colouring paste
- 1 tube of orange piping icing
- 1 tube of red piping icing

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin
- 2 Warm the honey, sugar, butter and milk in a pan until the sugar dissolves. Stir and allow to cool.
- 3 Sift the flour, baking powder and cocoa into a mixing bowl. Stir in the cooled honey mixture until blended, then stir in the eggs until the mixture is smooth.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 25 minutes. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl. Heat the cocoa, sugar and water in a pan over a low heat until the sugar has dissolved. Bring to a boil and immediately remove from the heat.
- 6 Pour onto the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Use while warm as this icing sets quickly.
- 7 Spread the icing on top of the cakes.
- 8 To decorate, roll 12 medium sized balls and 12 smaller balls of chocolate sugarpaste. Pinch the centres of the larger balls and press out to form the turkey wattle. You can also form the turkey using chocolate buttercream, but this is slightly trickier.
- 9 Elongate the smaller balls slightly.
- 10 Place the smaller balls on top of the larger balls, attaching with a dab of water. Mark with a knife to make the neck markings.
- 11 Roll out the orange, red and yellow sugarpastes separately and thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar.
- 12 Cut out 12 rounds of each colour, using a shaped cutter.
- 13 Place the yellow rounds on non-stick baking paper. Brush lightly with water.
- 14 Lay the orange circles over the yellow, slightly offset, brush with water and lay the red rounds, slightly offset, on top.
- 15 Line the cutter back up with the original yellow piece, then push down, trimming off the excess red and orange. Mark with a knife to make the tail markings.
- 16 Place the turkey bodies and heads on the cakes. Carefully attach the tails to the back of the bodies with a dab of edible glue.
- 17 Press the white sweets into the heads to form the eyes.
- 18 Knead the grey colouring into the white sugarpaste trimmings. Roll out as before and cut out 24 tiny rounds for the eye centres.
- 19 Brush with a little glue and attach to the white sweet eyes.
- 20 Press the chocolate chips into the grey sugarpaste.
- 21 Pipe the legs and beaks with orange piping icing. Leave to set.
- 22 Pipe a thick line of red piping icing next to the beaks, as in the photo and leave to set.







Photo © Stockfood, photography © iStock Photo

## Bauble cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

110g (4oz) butter

110g (4oz) caster sugar

2 free-range eggs, beaten

110g (4oz) self-raising flour

2 tsp grated orange zest

### TO DECORATE

350-450g (12-16oz) red sugarpaste

cornflour

edible gold lustre powder

200g (7oz) white sugarpaste

edible glue

edible gold glitter

### FOR THE TOPPING

80g (3oz) cream cheese

3 tbsp butter

½ tsp vanilla extract

1 tbsp milk

300g (11oz) icing sugar

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 24-hole mini muffin tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs until well blended. Sift in the flour and fold in gently with the orange zest, until just combined.

- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 10 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 To decorate, roll out the red sugarpaste on a textured confectionery mat dusted with cornflour.
- 5 Peel off the mat and cut out 24 rounds, slightly larger than the diameter of the cakes. Mould around small balls and leave overnight to firm and form dome shapes.
- 6 Brush the details on the domes with gold lustre powder and leave them to dry.
- 7 For the topping, beat together the cream cheese and butter. Beat in the vanilla and milk, then gradually sift in the icing sugar and beat well.
- 8 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe on top of the cakes.
- 9 Shape small pieces of white sugarpaste into 24 small thick cylinders for the tops of the baubles. Roll a long thin sausage and cut it into 24 small pieces.
- 10 Form loops with the strips and attach to the tops of the cylinders with glue.
- 11 Brush with gold lustre powder to cover completely.
- 12 Carefully place the domes on top of the topping. Attach the tops with glue. Leave to dry.
- 13 Sprinkle lightly with glitter.

# Dressed penguin cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

**110g (4oz) sugar**

**110g (4oz) soft butter**

**2 free-range eggs, beaten**

**finely grated zest of 1 small unwaxed lemon**

**175g (6oz) self-raising flour**

**2 tbsp milk**

## FOR THE ICING

**250g (9oz) royal icing sugar**

**2-3 tbsp lemon juice**

**hot water**

## TO DECORATE

**400g (14oz) black sugarpaste**

**200g (7oz) white sugarpaste**

**400-500g (14-18oz) pale blue sugarpaste**

**250-350g (9-12oz) red sugarpaste**

**icing sugar**

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Put all the cake ingredients into a mixing bowl and whisk with an electric whisk until well combined. Alternatively, beat well with a wooden spoon.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Remove from the tin and place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the icing, mix the royal icing sugar with the lemon juice and beat well until thick and smooth. Add a little hot water, beating until thick and smooth.
- 5 Spoon a little icing onto each cake and leave to set.
- 6 To decorate, divide about two-thirds of the black sugarpaste into 12

medium sized balls of black sugarpaste for the penguin bodies and 12 smaller balls for the heads.

**7** Roll 12 small pieces of white sugarpaste into small sausage shapes, then press on top of the medium sized black balls, smoothing the edges with your finger.

**8** Repeat with the smaller black balls and more white sugarpaste for the heads, curving the black sugarpaste in the head centre.

**9** Stand the bodies upright and attach the heads with a dab of water.

**10** Roll out 12 narrow sausages of black sugarpaste, cut each sausage in half and flatten for the wings. Attach to the bodies with a dab of water, curving them slightly.

**11** Roll 24 tiny balls of black sugarpaste, flatten and attach to the heads for the eyes.

**12** Roll 12 small balls of red sugarpaste, flatten and make an indentation in the centre, for the noses. Attach with a dab of water.

**13** Shape eight thick lozenge shapes for the feet, for each cake. Attach to the base of the bodies with a little water. Stand on non-stick baking paper and leave the penguins to dry.

**14** Roll out the blue sugarpaste as before and cut out small snowflake shapes with a cutter. Place on top of the icing.

**15** Cut 12 long strips of blue sugarpaste for the scarves. Cut into the ends to make a fringe and mark the strips with a cocktail stick for a textured effect.

**16** Mould 12 cones of blue sugarpaste and pinch out the ends for the hats. Attach to the penguins with a little water.

**17** Gently place the penguins on the cakes to finish.



## White Christmas tree cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

225g (8oz) butter

225g (8oz) caster sugar

finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed orange

225g (8oz) self-raising flour

4 free-range eggs

½ tsp baking powder

1 tsp ground cinnamon

### FOR THE TREES

200g (7oz) white gumpaste

gold food colouring

edible glue

### FOR THE VANILLA CREAM

350ml (12fl oz) double cream

¼ tsp cream of tartar

3 tbsp icing sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

sugar snowflakes

edible glitter

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Put the butter, sugar, orange zest and flour in a mixing bowl. Add the eggs, baking powder and cinnamon. Beat with an electric whisk until smooth and creamy.
- 3 Spoon the mixture into the cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the Christmas trees, roll the gumpaste into 12 balls. Reserve a little gumpaste for the stars.
- 5 Shape into tall cones and press the bases flat.
- 6 Make little snips all around the cones using small scissors, pulling out the ends of the snips, so that the gumpaste sticks out to form branches. Stand the trees on non-stick baking paper and leave them to harden.
- 7 Roll out the remaining gumpaste and cut out 12 tiny stars. Paint or brush with gold colouring and leave to dry.
- 8 Attach the stars to the top of the trees with a little glue.
- 9 For the vanilla cream, whisk together all the ingredients until thick but not stiff.
- 10 Spoon into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe on top of the cakes.
- 11 Carefully place the trees on the cakes.
- 12 Decorate with sugar snowflakes and sprinkle with glitter.

# Mug CAKES



PAUSE sucrée





## Rum 'n' raisins Christmas cake in a rush

Makes 1 cake

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 1 free-range egg
- 10g (½oz) caster sugar
- 10g (½oz) brown sugar
- vanilla essence or extract, to taste
- 50g (2oz) of rum-soaked fruit, including raisins or entirely raisins, to taste
- 50g (2oz) self-raising flour
- 20g (¾oz) butter, at room temperature

- 1 Whisk the egg, caster sugar and brown sugar in the mug.
- 2 Add vanilla essence to taste.
- 3 Mix in the fruit.
- 4 Mix in the flour.
- 5 Mix in the butter.
- 6 Microwave for 2 minutes.
- 7 Top with ice cream, fresh cream, butterscotch sauce or maple syrup.



The recipes on pages 36-37 are taken from *Cakes In A Mug* by Candice Clayton, published by New Holland.



## Chocolate brownie mugcake

Makes 1 cake

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 30g (1oz) dark chocolate
- 20g (¾oz) butter
- 20g (¾oz) brown sugar
- 30ml (1fl oz) thickened cream
- 10-15ml (½-¾fl oz) milk
- 50g (2oz) cornflour
- 10g (½oz) cocoa powder
- 1 free-range egg

- 1 Place the dark chocolate into a mug and heat in the microwave for 10 seconds.
- 2 Add the cold butter and heat for a further 20 seconds – 15 seconds if the butter is soft.
- 3 Mix in the brown sugar.
- 4 Whisk in the cream and then the milk, combining thoroughly.
- 5 Whisk in the cornflour.
- 6 Whisk in the cocoa powder.
- 7 Whisk the egg in a separate mug, then fold into the batter.
- 8 Microwave for 1 minute 30 seconds.

**TIP1** To make a milk chocolate brownie, simply replace the dark chocolate with milk chocolate.

**TIP2** To make it extra chocolatey, add one or two squares of chocolate to the top of the batter and let it melt as it cooks.



## Bubblegum rainbow mugcake

*Makes 1 cake*

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 1 free-range egg**
- 30g (1oz) caster sugar**
- 15g (½oz) vanilla bean sugar (optional)**
- bubblegum food flavouring**
- 30g (1oz) butter**
- 30ml (1fl oz) thickened cream**
- 50g (2oz) self-raising flour**
- gel food colouring of choice**

- 1** Whisk the egg in a mug until it is light and fluffy. Add both the caster and vanilla bean sugar and whisk.
- 2** Add bubblegum flavouring, butter and cream, whisking in well.
- 3** Gradually add in the self-raising flour, mixing thoroughly.
- 4** Split the cake batter into as many different little bowls or mugs as required to meet your colouring plan. Remember this is a small cake, so best not exceed five, to keep it manageable.
- 5** Add one drop of gel food colouring to each batch of cake batter and stir through thoroughly with a spoon until the colour is evenly distributed. Repeat for the remaining colours. If a deeper or more intense shade is wanted, add more colour, one drop at a time.
- 6** To get a rainbow effect you can simply spoon the cake batter into the mug one colour at a time, making sure not to layer the same colour on top of each other.
- 7** Microwave for 1 minute 20 seconds.

**TIP** This is a really fun party cake. Fairy floss and marshmallows make a great, simple decoration for the top. You can also consider topping it with pop rock candy for a tingly surprise; you can put the pop rock candy with ice cream or butter cream or fairy floss and marshmallows.



## Chocolate cherry mini forest mugcake

*Makes 1 cake*

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 1 free-range egg**
- 40g (1½oz) caster sugar**
- 60ml (2fl oz) thickened cream**
- 10g (½oz) cocoa powder**
- 50g (2oz) self-raising flour**
- 30g (1oz) butter**
- 40g (1½oz) cherries, chopped and pitted**

- 1** Melt the butter in a separate mug and set aside to cool.
- 2** Whisk together the egg and caster sugar.
- 3** Add the cream and whisk into the mixture.
- 4** Add the cocoa powder and self-raising flour – combine thoroughly to gradually make a paste.
- 5** Add the melted butter and mix through.
- 6** Lastly, fold in the cherries.
- 7** Microwave for 1 minute 30 seconds.
- 8** To serve, top with a dollop of fresh cream and cherries and a spot of jam to taste.

**TIP** If you are making this for an adult, you can add a shot of cherry liqueur to give your cake a kick. A great warmer for a cold winter's evening! Don't have fresh or frozen cherries? Add a few drops of loran oil cherry flavour as a substitute.





## Salted butter toffee mugcake

Makes 1 cake

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 3 tbsp butter, melted**
- 1 free-range egg, lightly beaten**
- 3 tbsp milk**
- 4 tbsp plain flour**
- 3 tbsp light brown sugar**
- ½ tsp baking powder**
- ½ tsp sea salt**
- 2 tbsp dulce de leche**

- 1** Put the butter into a microwaveable mug and microwave for 10 seconds to melt.
- 2** Add the egg and milk and lightly beat with a fork until combined.
- 3** Add the flour, sugar and baking powder and beat with a fork until they are blended.
- 4** Mix together the salt and dulce de leche.
- 5** Add 1 tbsp dulce de leche to the top of the mixture – this will sink as it cooks.
- 6** Microwave on medium for 1 minute until risen and slightly gooey in the middle. If still undercooked, cook it further in 10 second bursts.
- 7** Drizzle the remaining dulce de leche over the top.

**TIP** Microwave cooking times vary widely, so the cake needs to be watched all the time as it cooks. Depending on your microwave it could be ready in 1 minute or it could take up to 3 minutes.



## Financier-style mugcake

Makes 1 cake

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 3 tbsp plain flour**
- 2 tbsp sugar**
- ¼ tsp baking powder**
- ½ tbsp sunflower oil**
- 1 tbsp soured cream**
- 2 tbsp milk**
- 1 tbsp lemon juice**
- 3-4 raspberries**

### TO DECORATE

- icing sugar**
- coarsely grated white chocolate**

- 1** Lightly grease a large microwaveable mug.
- 2** Mix together the dry ingredients.
- 3** Stir in the wet ingredients and mix until just combined.
- 4** Spoon into the mug and place the raspberries in the centre. Leave plenty of room for rising – the cake will nearly double in height in the microwave.
- 5** Microwave for 45-60 seconds (800 watts), then leave the cake to cool for 1 minute.
- 6** Sift icing sugar over the top and sprinkle with white chocolate.

**TIP** Microwave cooking times vary widely, so the cake needs to be watched all the time as it cooks. Depending on your microwave it could be ready in 45 seconds or it could take up to 3 minutes.



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# The origins of Christmas baking

Jemma Lloyd takes your taste buds on a magical history tour of Christmas baking, including two irresistible festive recipes...

Feature by Jemma Lloyd from Iced Jems ([www.icedjems.com](http://www.icedjems.com))

It's the most wonderful time of year, where smells like gingerbread and cinnamon fill the kitchen and you can always find an excuse to bake. Candy canes, mince pies, gingerbread and Christmas pudding are all flavours we associate with this time of year, but most of us have never stopped to wonder why. Like many traditions, the origins of our favourite Christmas bakes started very differently, hundreds of years ago. Would you still want a mince pie if it contained

real minced meat? Would you be willing to eat gingerbread to ease your indigestion? The origins of some of your favourite Christmas treats may come as a bit of a surprise...



## CANDY CANES

There is much debate on the origin of candy canes, but the most popular story dates back to the 1600s. According to folklore, the choirmaster of a cathedral asked a local candy maker for sweet sticks to keep the children quiet during the Christmas Eve service. Eating sweets at church was

**FUN FACT** *Candy canes were plain white until the 1800s.*

frowned upon, so the choirmaster also asked the candy maker to add a crook to the top of each stick, to help the

children remember the shepherds who visited Jesus (and to justify giving out the sweets). Until recently, many candy manufacturers still struggled to make candy canes on a large scale due to



**FUN FACT** *An old superstition states it is good luck to eat a mince pie each of the 12 days of Christmas, and even better luck if you eat one in a different house each day.*

their unusual shape, with many of them breaking while they were being made. It wasn't until 1957, when a roman catholic priest created a machine automating the process of twisting

**FUN FACT** *In Norway, the town of Bergen creates an entire city made from gingerbread houses each year, with over 1900 gingerbread buildings!*

and shaping the cane that wide scale manufacturing began.

## MINCE PIES

The mince pie has changed dramatically since its creation in the 13th century. The recipe was originally brought over from the middle east by crusaders and it did indeed contain minced meat (the animal kind, not the fruit kind we use in them today), it was also oblong

in shape. Over the years, the recipe became sweeter and sweeter until the meat was removed completely. During the 1700s in the UK, mince pies actually became a status symbol of the very

rich, who were the only ones who could afford to serve them at parties.

## GINGERBREAD HOUSES

Gingerbread has been around since the 11th century, another recipe brought back by crusaders from the middle east! Ginger was used in the bread for its preserving properties, but

the bread was also eaten to aid digestion. Gingerbread was so popular throughout Europe in the 17th century that gingerbread bakers had their own bakers guild, only members of this guild were permitted to make gingerbread, apart from at Easter and Christmas.

The tradition of making gingerbread into houses began in Germany after the brothers Grimm published their collection of German fairy tales in



the early 1800s. The popular story of Hansel and Gretel depicted an edible house made of bread and covered with sugar decorations, which started the gingerbread house craze. The houses became so popular that gingerbread bakers would employ local artists to come and decorate their bakes.

#### CHRISTMAS PUDDING

Christmas pudding originates from something called pottage, a slow cooked meat and vegetable mix with fruits, sugar and spices. This was served in the 15th century at the beginning of a meal and often called plum pottage. Today, Christmas pudding is still sometimes referred to as plum pudding, despite not containing any plums. This is due to the pre-Victorian use of the word 'plums' to mean raisins.



Christmas puddings are now traditionally made up on what is known as 'stir-up Sunday' (the Sunday before Advent), when everyone in the household can give the mixture a stir and make a wish while doing so.

**FUN FACT** *Thimbles or buttons used to be added to Christmas puddings in place of a coin. Whoever found the object in their serving was supposed to remain a spinster or bachelor forever, so it's no surprise that this tradition died out.*



## Mince pie cupcakes

By Jemma Lloyd from Iced Jems  
([www.icedjems.com](http://www.icedjems.com))

Makes 12

#### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**200g (7oz) butter or margarine**

**200g (7oz) caster sugar**

**3 medium free-range eggs**

**2 tbsp single cream**

**200g (7oz) self-raising flour**

**250g (9oz) mincemeat**

#### FOR THE TOPPING

**100g (3½oz) mincemeat**

**150g (5¼oz) white sugarpaste**

**50g (1½oz) icing sugar**

**brown and yellow food colour pastes**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 140°C/Gas Mark 1. Place your baking cups onto a flat tray (or deep muffin tray if using paper cases).
- 2 Cream together the butter and sugar in a mixer on slow speed until well combined.
- 3 Add the eggs and cream to the mixture and mix on a high speed until you have a thin batter.
- 4 Sift in the self-raising flour and mix a final time until you have a thick cupcake batter.
- 5 Spoon the batter into the cases, filling them just under halfway. Place a heaped teaspoonful of mincemeat mixture onto each cupcake. Place the tray in the middle of your oven and bake for about 20 minutes until golden brown.
- 6 Once baked, spoon the 100g (3½oz) of mincemeat for the topping onto the cupcakes, spreading it out right to the edges, then transfer them to a wire rack to cool.
- 7 Mix the icing sugar with a few tsp of water and mix until it's a thick paste. Pour this around the outside edges of your cupcakes in a thin outline, this adds a bit of sweetness and acts as a glue for the sugarpaste.
- 8 Add a small amount of brown and yellow food colour pastes to your sugarpaste, to give it a pastry colour. Roll out to about 5mm (¼in) thickness, then cut out circles large enough to cover the top of the cakes.
- 9 Cut a star shape out of the centre of each circle, then transfer the toppers to your cupcakes. Secure them by running a fork around the outside edge, this will also give it the pastry case effect.





## Candy cane cupcakes

By Jemma Lloyd from Iced Jems  
([www.icedjems.com](http://www.icedjems.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**200g (7oz) butter or margarine**

**200g (7oz) caster sugar**

**3 medium free-range eggs**

**2 tbsp milk**

**200g (7oz) self-raising flour**

**1 tsp peppermint extract (or vanilla if you don't like peppermint)**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**250g (9oz) unsalted butter**

**500g (1lb 2oz) icing sugar**

**3 tbsp milk**

**1 tsp peppermint extract (or vanilla if you don't like peppermint)**

**50g (1¾oz) caster sugar**

**50g (1¾oz) red sanding sugar**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 140°C/Gas Mark 1 – these cupcakes bake best on a low heat. Place your baking cups onto a flat tray (or deep muffin tray if using paper cases).
- 2** Cream together your butter and sugar in a mixer on a slow speed until well combined.
- 3** Add your eggs, milk and peppermint extract to the mixture and mix on a high speed until you have a thin batter.
- 4** Sift in the self-raising flour and mix a final time until you have a thick cupcake batter.
- 5** Spoon the batter into the cases, filling them about halfway – this should give you flat-topped cupcakes. Place the tray in the middle of the oven and bake for about 20 minutes until golden brown. Once baked, remove and transfer to a wire rack to cool.
- 6** For the frosting, place your butter into a large bowl and beat until light and fluffy. The longer you beat your butter, the lighter it becomes in colour – and a white frosting is perfect for these cupcakes.
- 7** Add the icing sugar, peppermint extract and milk to the butter on a high speed until you have a light and fluffy buttercream.
- 8** Spread a thin layer of buttercream over the top of your cooled cupcakes using a palette knife, then dip the cupcake into the white caster sugar until completely coated.
- 9** Place the rest of the buttercream into a piping bag and snip off the end so that it has a small round opening. Pipe four curved triangle shapes onto the top of your cupcake, starting from the centre. Make sure the frosting is quite thick and stands a good few millimetres above the caster sugar layer.
- 10** Dip the cupcake into the red sanding sugar, pressing very gently to ensure it only sticks to the newly piped layer of buttercream.

# Chocolate

CUPCAKES







## Mozart white chocolate cupcakes

By Betsy Eves from JavaCupcake ([javacupcake.com](http://javacupcake.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**350g (12oz) plain flour**  
**2 tsp baking powder**  
**¼ tsp salt**  
**90g (3oz) unsalted butter,**  
**at room temperature**  
**175g (6oz) sugar**  
**2 free-range egg whites**  
**1 tsp clear vanilla extract**  
**90g (3oz) white**  
**chocolate, melted**  
**60ml (2fl oz) milk**  
**60ml (2fl oz) sour cream**

**60ml (2fl oz) hot water**

**60ml (2fl oz) Mozart white**  
**chocolate liqueur**

### FOR THE FROSTING

**25g (1oz) white**  
**chocolate, melted**  
**115g (4oz) unsalted butter,**  
**at room temperature**  
**2 tsp Mozart white**  
**chocolate liqueur**  
**1 tsp vanilla**  
**60ml (2fl oz) milk or cream**  
**450g (1lb) sifted**  
**icing sugar**

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a cupcake tin with cases.
- 2 In a bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.
- 3 In a measuring cup that pours, mix the milk and sour cream.
- 4 Use a double boiler on medium-high heat to melt the chocolate. Set aside to cool. Meanwhile, use a stand mixer with paddle attachment to cream the butter and sugar.

- 5 Add the egg whites one at a time and mix until incorporated. Scrape the sides of the bowl. Mix in the vanilla.
- 6 On medium, slowly pour the chocolate into the mixture. Scrape the sides and mix until completely combined.
- 7 Add the flour and milk/sour cream alternately, beginning and ending with the flour. Scrape the bowl sides and mix only until combined.
- 8 Add the hot water and mix just until incorporated.
- 9 Fill the cupcake cases three-quarters full with batter.
- 10 Bake for 18-20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.
- 11 Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. After the cupcakes have completely cooled, poke 10-15 holes with a toothpick in each cupcake. Brush the liqueur over the top, making sure it soaks into the cupcake.

### FOR THE MOZART WHITE CHOCOLATE FROSTING

- 1 Cream the butter. While that is creaming, melt the white chocolate using a double boiler. Cool slightly after melted.
- 2 Mix in the liqueur and vanilla to the butter. Slowly drizzle the melted chocolate into the butter mixture until completely incorporated, scraping the sides.
- 3 One cup at a time, add the powdered sugar and beat until smooth. Scrape the sides of the bowl. Add the milk until you get the consistency you desire. Mix on high for 3 minutes.
- 4 With a Wilton 1M piping tip fitting on a piping bag, pipe a swirl of frosting onto the top of the cupcakes.

# Chocolate cupcakes with fudge topping

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) soft butter
- 110g (4oz) light brown sugar
- 80g (3oz) self-raising flour
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder
- a pinch of baking powder
- 2 free-range eggs

## FOR THE FUDGE FROSTING

- 250ml (9fl oz) double cream
- 250g (9oz) plain chocolate, chopped

## TO DECORATE

- icing sugar

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place 12 paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Whisk together all the cupcake ingredients in a mixing bowl until smooth and blended.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 15-20 minutes until well risen and firm to the touch. Place on a wire rack and leave to cool completely.
- 4 For the fudge frosting, heat the cream in a pan and bring to a boil. Immediately remove from the heat and pour over the chocolate. Stir until the chocolate has melted. Chill until the mixture is thick enough to pipe.
- 5 Put into a piping bag and pipe on top of the cakes. Sift a little icing sugar over the top.



# Chocolate cupcakes with caramelised popcorn

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) butter
- 110g (4oz) light brown sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- 150g (5oz) plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder
- 100ml (3½fl oz) milk

## FOR THE TOPPING

- 120g (4oz) plain chocolate

## FOR THE POPCORN TOPPING

- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 40g (1½oz) popping corn
- 40g (1½oz) light brown sugar
- 2 tbsp golden syrup
- 50g (1½oz) butter

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter in a mixing bowl until soft and light. Beat in the sugar and beat until light and fluffy.
- 3 Beat in the eggs, gradually, until well blended. Sift in the flour, baking powder and cocoa and fold in gently until incorporated. Stir in the milk.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until firm to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the topping, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat and leave to cool slightly.
- 6 Drizzle the chocolate over the cakes.
- 7 For the popcorn topping, heat the oil in a large pan, sprinkle in the popping corn and swirl the pan to coat it evenly in oil. Cover with a tight-fitting lid; reduce the heat to low and as soon as the popping stops, remove from the heat.
- 8 Melt the butter in a pan, add the sugar and golden syrup and stir over a medium heat for 2-3 minutes until golden.
- 9 Pour the toffee over the popcorn. Cover the pan and shake to coat with the toffee sauce. Spoon on top of the cakes.







## Mocha cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**150g (5oz) soft butter**

**150g (5oz) caster sugar**

**175g (6oz) self-raising flour**

**3 free-range eggs, beaten**

**2 tbsp cocoa powder**

### FOR THE COFFEE BUTTERCREAM

**110g (4oz) unsalted butter**

**225g (8oz) icing sugar**

**1 tbsp strong black coffee, cooled**

**hot water, if needed**

### FOR THE CHOCOLATE BUTTERCREAM

**100g (3½oz) plain chocolate**

**55g (2oz) butter**

**250g (9oz) icing sugar**

**2 tbsp milk**

### TO DECORATE

**125g (4½oz) plain chocolate, melted**

**roasted coffee beans**

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Place all the cupcake ingredients in a mixing bowl and whisk with an electric whisk until blended. Alternatively, beat well with a wooden spoon.
- 3 Spoon the mixture into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until springy to the touch. Place the cupcakes on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the coffee buttercream, beat the butter until very soft. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the coffee until smooth. If the mixture is too stiff add a little hot water.
- 5 Spread the buttercream on the cakes.
- 6 For the chocolate buttercream, melt the chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat and leave to cool.
- 7 Sift in the icing sugar and whisk until smooth. Whisk in the milk.
- 8 Spoon into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe a rosette in the centre of each of the cakes.
- 9 Drizzle the cupcakes with the melted chocolate and decorate with coffee beans. Leave to set.

## Rum choc cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**125g (4½oz) raisins, plus 24 extra**

**60ml (2fl oz) dark rum**

**140g (5oz) light brown sugar**

**185g (6½oz) unsalted butter**

**2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten**

**200g (7oz) self-raising flour**

**50g (1¾oz) cocoa powder**

**125ml (4½fl oz) buttermilk**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**200g (7oz) unsalted butter**

**200g (7oz) icing sugar**

**200g (7oz) marshmallow fluff**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

**ground cinnamon**

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 24-hole mini muffin tin.
- 2 Combine the raisins and rum in a small pan. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for about 30 seconds, until the rum has absorbed. Set aside to cool.
- 3 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and creamy. Beat in the eggs.
- 4 Sift in the flour and cocoa, then gradually add the buttermilk until blended. Fold in the raisin/rum mixture. Spoon into the cases. Bake for 15 minutes, until a skewer comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the topping, beat the butter until soft and creamy. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Beat in the marshmallow fluff and vanilla until well blended.
- 6 Spoon into a piping bag with a plain nozzle and pipe a thick domed round on top of the cakes. Place a raisin on each dome.
- 7 Sift a little cinnamon over the top.



# Mint cream cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150g (5oz) butter
- 300g (11oz) caster sugar
- 3 free-range eggs, beaten
- 250ml (9fl oz) milk
- 225g (8oz) plain flour
- a pinch of salt
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 55g (2oz) cocoa powder
- 75g (2½oz) chocolate chips

## FOR THE MINT BUTTERCREAM

- 100g (3½oz) unsalted butter
- 200g (7oz) icing sugar
- 1-2 tbsp whipping cream
- 3-4 drops of peppermint extract
- green food colouring

## TO DECORATE

- Bourbon biscuits, broken

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a bowl until light and creamy, then the eggs and milk.
- 3 Sift in the flour, salt, bicarbonate of soda and cocoa and stir well. Stir in the choc chips.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Remove from the tin and place the cakes on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the mint buttercream, beat the butter in a bowl until soft. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Beat in the cream and peppermint until blended. Stir in a few drops of green food colouring.
- 6 Spread on top of the cakes and decorate with Bourbon biscuits.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

# Oreo cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 85g (3oz) plain chocolate
- 100g (3½oz) butter
- 100g (3½oz) caster sugar
- 200ml (7fl oz) milk
- 1 free-range egg
- 100ml (3½fl oz) soured cream
- 200g (7oz) plain flour
- 2 tsp cornflour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 3 tbsp cocoa powder
- a pinch of salt

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 112ml (4fl oz) double cream
- 225g (8oz) plain chocolate, chopped
- 55g (2oz) unsalted butter
- 150g (5oz) cream cheese
- 55g (2oz) icing sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 1 Oreo cookie, finely crushed

## TO DECORATE

- caster sugar
- 12 mini Oreo cookies

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place 12 paper cases in a muffin tin.
- 2 Melt the chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat.
- 3 Whisk together the sugar, milk, egg and soured cream in a bowl until smooth.
- 4 Sift in the flour, cornflour, baking powder, cocoa and salt and stir in with the melted chocolate until blended.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until risen and firm. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the buttercream, heat the cream in a pan and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and pour onto the chocolate. Stir until melted, then cool. Chill until thick.
- 7 Whisk the chocolate mixture until it is light and thick.
- 8 Beat the butter until soft, then beat in the cheese until blended. Sift in the icing sugar and stir in the vanilla until smooth. Stir in the cookie crumbs.
- 9 Spoon both the chocolate and cream cheese mixtures side by side into a piping bag, so that they sit evenly next to each other inside the bag.
- 10 Pipe a swirl on top of the cakes and sprinkle with caster sugar.
- 11 Place a cookie on top of each cake.



## Chocolate CUPCAKES

Recipe and photography © Stockfood

## Chocolate peanut butter cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) soft butter
- 110g (4oz) light brown sugar
- 85g (3oz) self-raising flour
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder
- a pinch of baking powder
- 2 free-range eggs

### FOR THE FROSTING

- 120g (4oz) unsalted butter
- 110g (4oz) smooth peanut butter
- 85g (3oz) icing sugar
- a pinch of salt
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp double cream

### TO DECORATE

- 5-6 peanut butter chocolates, sliced

## Chocolate cupcakes with cola

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 200g (7oz) plain flour
- 250g (9oz) caster sugar
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 large free-range egg
- 125ml (4½fl oz) buttermilk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 125g (4½oz) unsalted butter
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 175ml (6fl oz) cola

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 110g (4oz) unsalted butter
- 6 tbsp cola
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder
- 400g (14oz) icing sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

- 55g (2oz) unsalted butter
- 100g (3½oz) icing sugar
- cola gummy sweets

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole deep bun or muffin tin.
- 2 Sift together the flour, sugar, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Set aside.
- 3 Beat together the egg, buttermilk and vanilla.
- 4 Heat the butter, cocoa and cola in a pan until the butter has melted.
- 5 Pour into the dry ingredients, stir well with a wooden spoon, then add the buttermilk mixture, beating until well blended.
- 6 Pour into the paper cases and bake for 15-20 minutes until cooked through. Cool in the tin for 15 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 For the buttercream, mix together the cocoa, cola and butter in a pan and heat until melted, then bring to a boil.
- 8 Remove from the heat and sift in the icing sugar and vanilla, beating well. Leave to cool until stiff enough to pipe.
- 9 Pipe on top of the cakes.
- 10 To decorate, beat the butter until very soft. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
- 11 Spoon into a small piping bag with a star nozzle and pipe a star on top of the buttercream. Decorate with cola sweets.



Recipe © Stockfood, photography © iStock, Photo

# Chocolate heart cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) butter
- 110g (4oz) light brown sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- 150g (5oz) plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder
- 110ml (4fl oz) milk

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 75ml (2½fl oz) double cream
- 175g (6oz) milk chocolate, chopped
- 50g (1½oz) butter

## TO DECORATE

- chocolate hearts
- 6 chocolate coated pretzels, broken in half

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Place 12 paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter in a bowl until soft and light. Beat in the sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, gradually until blended. Sift in the flour, baking powder and cocoa and fold gently until incorporated. Stir in the milk.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and firm to the touch. Leave in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the buttercream, heat the cream to a boil in a pan. Remove from the heat and add the chocolate. Stir until melted, then stir in the butter until the mixture is smooth and shiny. Chill until thick enough to spread.
- 5 Spread buttercream on each cake. Decorate with hearts and a pretzel half in each cake centre.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood



Recipe © Stockfood, photography © iStock Photo

# Ferrero Rocher cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150g (5oz) butter
- 3 free-range eggs
- 150g (5oz) icing sugar
- 110g (4oz) self-raising flour
- 50g (1½oz) ground hazelnuts
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

## FOR THE CHOCOLATE TOPPING

- 110g (4oz) unsalted butter
- 225g (8oz) chocolate hazelnut spread
- 200g (7oz) icing sugar
- 1 tbsp whipping cream

## FOR THE HAZELNUT TOPPING

- 110g (4oz) sugar
- 2 free-range egg whites
- a pinch of salt
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract
- 115g (4oz) unsalted butter, chopped
- 1 tbsp hazelnut-praline paste

## TO DECORATE

- chopped roasted hazelnuts

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat together the butter, eggs and sugar in a mixing bowl until they are light and fluffy. Stir in the flour, ground hazelnuts and vanilla until blended.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 15 minutes until golden. (Test to see if they are done by inserting a skewer or cocktail stick, it should come out clean.) Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the chocolate topping, beat together the butter and chocolate hazelnut spread until smooth and combined. Gradually sift in the icing sugar, beating until smooth. Beat in the cream.
- 5 For the hazelnut topping, combine the sugar, egg whites, salt and vanilla in a large heatproof bowl set over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water.
- 6 Whisk with an electric whisk at high speed for 7-10 minutes, until the frosting is thick and fluffy. Remove from the heat and beat in the butter, a little at a time until incorporated. Continue to whisk until light.
- 7 Beat in the hazelnut paste.
- 8 Put the chocolate topping into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe a swirl on to each cake.
- 9 Put the hazelnut topping into a piping bag and pipe a swirl in the centre of each of the cake toppings.
- 10 Sprinkle with roasted hazelnuts.



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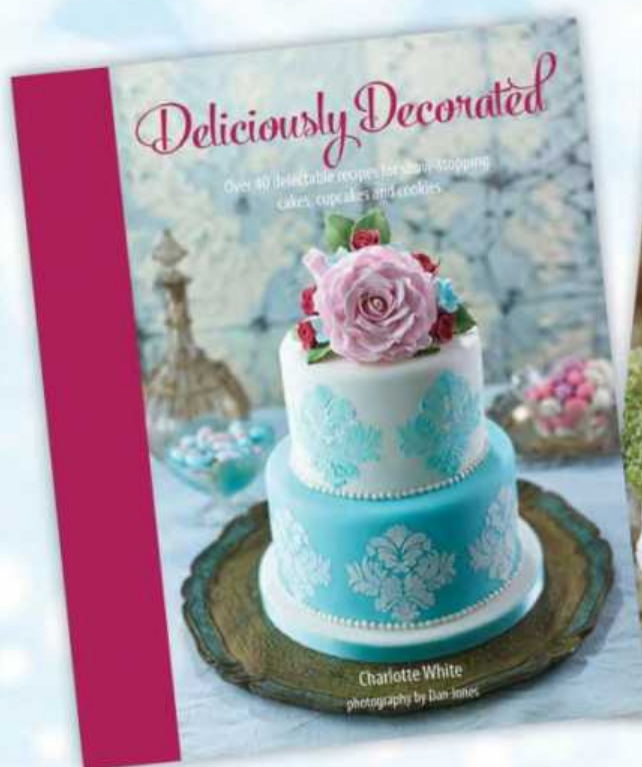
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## IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

# Maria Goodman

It's not unusual to use food to cope with tough times like a job loss, but Maria Goodman didn't eat her way out of trouble, she founded Molly Bakes and baked her way out.

### Q When did you first get hooked on baking?

I started baking six years ago. I had only ever been interested in eating cakes, then I thought I would try out a cupcake recipe in a magazine. I found baking came quite naturally and a month later I lost my job, so I ended up baking a lot.

### Q What appeals to you most about cupcakes?

Cupcakes have proved to have true staying power. Every few months we're told that something new is taking the place of cupcakes, but nothing has

### Q What do you find the most challenging thing about running a bakery business?

Managing incoming and outgoing orders at the same time.

### Q What are your top tips for cupcake success?

Beat butter into oblivion to make smooth, creamy buttercream.

### Q Who did you pick up your cake decorating skills from?

There are cake decorators and bakers in my extended family and my mother

*Nothing has the universal appeal and versatility of cupcakes. They're still what our customers order most of.*

the universal appeal and versatility of cupcakes. They're still what our customers order most of.

### Q When and why did you decide to set up the Molly Bakes business?

I set up Molly Bakes about six months after losing my job in late 2009. I was still jobless, there wasn't much around at the beginning of the recession and I was running out of savings. I spent the last of it buying cake stands and ingredients to start a market stall.

### Q Where does the name Molly Bakes come from?

Molly is a portmanteau of Maria and Olly, my husband. I wanted a cute name that was a little silly, so that was it.

### Q What inspired you to create a chocolate book?

My publisher Square Peg came up with the idea for one, they felt it was the perfect follow up to my first book *Cake Pops*. It was amazing learning everything I could about chocolate, both before and during writing the book.



### Q How do you go about putting your books together?

Lots of research, recipe testing and perfecting a finished product for the photo shoots. It's a long process but it's very rewarding.

### Q Can you tell us about your cake pops?

I noticed the trend on American blogs in early 2010 – my first attempts weren't great. There wasn't a whole lot of information on them back then, so it took me about six months to get perfect. Now anyone who comes into the bakery can perfect them in 6 minutes, which is quite funny. We mainly make cake pops for corporate orders, we produce thousands – they're perfect for large scale events.

### Q What's coming next for Molly Bakes?

We're opening a shop in Dalston. It will be a cafe/cake shop and will open in time for Christmas. It has been my dream for six years. I'm happy to keep the business small and boutique, I don't want to supply shops or supermarkets, although I would like to have a few shops across London, so that more of our customers can get our cakes. I love all the brands and customers we work with, most of them have been very loyal over the years and I don't think they would be ordering from us if we were a massive chain. Every day is different and exciting at MB because of the bespoke nature of our business – it's something we want to keep, otherwise it would get boring doing the same thing every day.

Find out more about  
Molly Bakes at  
[www.mollybakes.co.uk](http://www.mollybakes.co.uk)

# Salted caramel cupcakes

By Maria Goodman ([www.mollybakes.co.uk](http://www.mollybakes.co.uk))

Makes 12

## FOR THE CAKE

- 190g (6¾oz) self-raising flour, sifted
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 125g (4½oz) unsalted butter, softened
- 75g (2¾oz) caster sugar
- 75g (2¾oz) dark muscovado sugar
- 2 large free-range eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 125ml (4½fl oz) milk, at room temperature

## FOR THE SALTED CARAMEL SAUCE

- 170g (6oz) unsalted butter
- 200g (7oz) golden caster sugar
- 100g (3½oz) golden syrup
- 1 tsp fleur de sel or Maldon sea salt
- 250ml (9fl oz) double cream

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 500g (1lb 2oz) unsalted butter, softened
- 1kg (2lb 4oz) icing sugar, sifted
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- a third of a portion of salted caramel sauce

## FOR THE HONEYCOMB

- 4 tbsp golden syrup
- 1 tbsp water
- 200g (7oz) golden caster sugar
- 3 tsp bicarbonate of soda

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a muffin tin with cupcake cases.
- 2 Whisk together the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Beat the butter and sugars together until light and fluffy. Mix in the vanilla extract. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing for 1 minute between each addition. With the mixer on low speed, add half the flour and then half the milk until fully combined. Repeat with the remaining flour and milk – don't over mix.
- 3 Scoop the mixture equally into the cupcake cases, they should be around two-thirds full. Bake for 15-18 minutes or until a cake tester inserted into the centre comes out clean.
- 4 Transfer onto a wire rack to cool.

## FOR THE SALTED CARAMEL SAUCE

- 1 Melt 70g (2½oz) of the butter, all of the sugar and golden syrup together in a heavy-bottomed pan over medium to high heat. Leave to simmer for 2 minutes until the butter has melted, gently stirring every now and then.
- 2 Once the butter has almost melted, stir the sugar continuously with a wooden spoon to break it up. If the sugar clumps together, just keep stirring, it will melt. Pay close attention so it doesn't burn and make sure you move all of the sugar around especially the centre and sides of the pan.
- 3 Continue cooking until the mixture reaches a deep amber colour, at this point it can burn easily so keep a close eye on it. Use a thermometer to get the temperature up to 176°C.
- 4 Immediately add the rest of the butter and gently stir until it has melted.
- 5 Remove the pan from the heat and pour in the cream slowly. Stir until the cream is fully incorporated and the mixture is smooth.
- 6 Stir in the salt.
- 7 Cool for 10 minutes in the pan, then pour into a glass bowl until it reaches room temperature. Pour a third of the sauce into a separate bowl for the buttercream.

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 1 Beat the butter until smooth and creamy, add the sugar gradually and beat until light and fluffy. Beat in the vanilla.
- 2 Add the salted caramel sauce and beat in until fully incorporated.
- 3 Once the cupcakes are fully cooled, pipe the buttercream using a piping bag or spread onto the cupcakes using a palette knife.

## FOR THE HONEYCOMB

- 1 Grease and line a 20cm (8in) square cake tin or tray.
- 2 Heat the golden syrup and sugar together in a large saucepan, bring to the boil then simmer on a low heat for 5-10 minutes.
- 3 You can test if it's ready by dropping a little of the syrup mixture into water, it should become brittle.
- 4 Remove from the heat and add the bicarbonate of soda. Working quickly, mix it in as it will begin to foam up upon contact. Pour into the cake tin immediately.
- 5 Leave to set, then remove from the tin by pulling up the baking paper. Cut into shards using a sharp knife. Store in an airtight container until ready to use.

## TO DECORATE

- 1 Transfer the remaining salted caramel sauce into a piping bag.
- 2 Use the shards of honeycomb to decorate. You can also use some salted caramel popcorn, our favourite is Joe & Seph's.
- 3 Drizzle with the salted caramel sauce.







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# Christmas

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# Fun & Fancy

CUPCAKES







## Party dress cupcakes

By Rainbow Dust Colours Ltd ([www.rainbowdust.co.uk](http://www.rainbowdust.co.uk))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**12 basic vanilla cupcakes (see page 113)**

### TO DECORATE

sugarpaste

flowerpaste

royal icing

Rainbow Dust Edible Glue

Rainbow Dust Double-Sided Food Pens – various colours

apricot jam, warm

### SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

heart shape cutter

leaf, circle and various flower cutters

brush

rolling pin

- 1** Bake 12 cupcakes according to your favourite recipe or the one on page 113 and leave to cool before decorating.
- 2** Brush the tops of your cupcakes with warm apricot jam, then roll out white sugarpaste and cut out discs for the cupcake tops.
- 3** Roll out white flowerpaste and cut out 12 medium size heart shapes and leave these to dry until firm. These are for the top half of the dresses.
- 4** For the skirt part of the dress, roll out white flowerpaste, then cut out shapes using the various flower, leaf and shape cutters, creating a different style of dress for each cupcake. Thin the edges of each shape by rolling a cel pin over this to give the shape more movement. Brush over each cupcake with edible glue, placing the shapes on top to create a skirt.
- 5** Pipe the centre of your cupcake with royal icing, placing your heart shape, stood up, in the centre. Use pieces of sponge to support this whilst drying. Leave to dry overnight until completely firm and then remove the sponge supports.
- 6** Now you are ready to add colour and detail to your dresses using lots of different coloured pens from the range. Using the thick end of the pen, draw around the outer edges of the shapes, then add details using the finer end of the pen.
- 7** Finally, add mini flowers to your dresses for that finishing touch, securing in place with royal icing, then adding more lines of colour to complete.



## Alice in Wonderland clock cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

175g (6oz) butter

175g (6oz) caster sugar

3 free-range eggs, beaten

175g (6oz) self-raising flour

a pinch of salt

finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed lime

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

100g (3½oz) white chocolate

80g (3oz) unsalted butter

120g (4oz) icing sugar

4 tsp lime juice

green food colouring paste

### TO DECORATE

250g (9oz) white sugarpaste

icing sugar

350g (12oz) yellow sugarpaste

edible gold lustre powder, or gold food colouring

1 black food colour pen

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until pale and fluffy.
- 3 Gradually beat in the eggs, beating until fully incorporated into the mixture. Fold in the flour, salt and lime zest until blended.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases. Bake for 15-20 minutes until golden brown and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the buttercream, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat.
- 6 Beat the butter until soft and creamy. Sift in the sugar and beat well. Beat in the lime juice until thick and creamy. Stir in the chocolate and a little green colour until blended. Spread on the cakes.
- 7 To decorate, roll out the white sugarpaste on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar about 5mm (¼in) thick and cut out 12 small rounds for the clock faces. Roll 12 ropes of yellow paste about 5mm (¼in) in diameter and brush lightly with water. Wrap around the white rounds. Roll 12 thinner ropes of yellow paste and 12 tiny discs for the top of the clock. Make an indentation in the middle of the discs. Brush lightly with water. Wrap the thinner ropes between the clock face and the thick rope case. Attach the clock tops.
- 8 Brush the yellow sugarpaste with gold powder or food colouring.
- 9 Draw numbers and hands with black colouring and leave to set and dry on non-stick baking paper. Place on the cakes when dry.



## Monster cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 200g (7oz) plain flour
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 110g (4oz) sugar
- 2 free-range eggs
- 100ml (3½fl oz) sunflower oil
- 225ml (8fl oz) milk
- 75g (2½oz) chocolate, finely chopped

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 175g (6oz) unsalted butter
- 300g (11oz) icing sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- purple food colouring paste

### TO DECORATE

- 200g (7oz) white marzipan
- 24 chocolate chips
- icing sugar
- 225g (8oz) black sugarpaste
- 100g (3½oz) red sugarpaste

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Sift the flour, cocoa and baking powder into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar.
- 3 Whisk together the eggs and oil in a separate bowl until frothy, then slowly whisk in the milk.
- 4 Stir into the dry ingredients until just blended. The mixture will be slightly lumpy. Gently stir in the chocolate.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the buttercream, beat the butter until creamy. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Beat in the vanilla and food colouring.
- 7 Spoon into a piping bag with a star nozzle and pipe on top of the cakes, to cover the tops.
- 8 Roll some of the white marzipan into 24 small balls for the eyes and place on top of the buttercream. Attach the chocolate chips to the eyes with a dab of buttercream.
- 9 Cut tiny triangles from the remaining marzipan for the teeth.
- 10 Roll out the black sugarpaste thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out 12 stars using a cutter or card template. Place on the buttercream, as in the photo.
- 11 Divide the red sugarpaste into 12 pieces and roll each piece into a flattened oval for the tongues.
- 12 Attach to the sugarpaste stars with a dab of water.
- 13 Place the white triangles on the stars for the teeth, attaching with a dab of water.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

## Dog face cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150g (5oz) butter
- 150g (5oz) caster sugar
- 3 free-range eggs, beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 150g (5oz) self-raising flour
- 1 tbsp milk

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 110g (4oz) butter
- 110g (4oz) vegetable shortening
- 550g (11lb 3oz) icing sugar
- 1 tbsp boiling water
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

- 300g (11oz) black sugarpaste
- 55g (2oz) red sugarpaste
- 75g (2½oz) white sugarpaste
- 1 tube of black piping icing or gel

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs and vanilla until blended. Sift in the flour and gently stir into the mixture with the milk, until combined.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the buttercream, whisk together the butter, shortening and icing sugar until smooth. Whisk in the boiling water and vanilla extract and mix until thick. Spread on the cakes, reserving some for piping.
- 5 To decorate, roll 12 balls of black sugarpaste for the noses. Flatten slightly and make indentations with a cocktail stick. Place in the centre of the cakes.
- 6 Roll 24 pieces of black sugarpaste into balls and press out to elongate into ovals for the ears. Place on the cakes, as in the photo.
- 7 Roll 12 small balls of red paste and flatten for the tongues. Mark a line down the centre of each and place on the bottom of the cakes.
- 8 Roll 48 small balls of white sugarpaste, flatten slightly and attach to the ears with a dab of water.
- 9 Pipe the eyes and mouth with black piping icing.
- 10 Put the remaining buttercream in a small piping bag with a star nozzle and pipe a small swirl between the ears.
- 11 Pipe a swirl on either side of the noses.





## Hedgehog cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 100g (3½oz) plain chocolate, grated
- 100g (3½oz) butter
- 75g (2½oz) sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- a pinch of salt
- 1 free-range egg
- 200g (7oz) plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tsp cocoa powder
- 100ml (3½fl oz) milk

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 75g (2½oz) unsalted butter
- 225g (8oz) icing sugar, more if needed
- 1½ tbsp instant coffee powder
- 1½ tbsp cocoa powder
- 70ml (2½fl oz) milk, more if needed

### FOR THE HEDGEHOGS

- 350g (12oz) chocolate sugarpaste
- icing sugar
- 100g (3½oz) white sugarpaste
- 100g (3½oz) yellow sugarpaste

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 24-hole mini muffin tin.
- 2 Beat together the chocolate and butter in a mixing bowl until soft and creamy.
- 3 Gradually beat in the sugar, vanilla and salt until smooth.

- 4 Beat in the egg until incorporated. Gradually sift in the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and cocoa and fold in gently, alternating with the milk, until well blended.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 15 minutes, until springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the buttercream, beat together all the ingredients until smooth and thick. If it is too thick, add a little more milk; if too thin, add more icing sugar. Spread some of the buttercream on the cakes.
- 7 Spoon the remainder into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe 'ribbons' on top of the cakes. Chill until ready to serve.
- 8 For the hedgehogs, roll 12 medium size balls of chocolate sugarpaste and 12 smaller balls. Flatten one end of the larger balls and make small snips with a pair of scissors for the spines.
- 9 Press out the smaller balls into cone shapes. Attach with a dab of water for the heads, as in the photo.
- 10 Roll 36 tiny balls for the snouts and eye balls. Attach the snouts to the hedgehogs with a dab of water.
- 11 Roll out the white sugarpaste thinly on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar and cut out tiny discs for the eyes. Attach with a dab of water. Flatten the eye balls slightly and attach to the white discs with a dab of water.
- 12 Roll out the yellow sugarpaste thinly and cut out 24 small discs.
- 13 Place on top of the buttercream and place the hedgehogs on top.

## Racing car cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 200g (7oz) sugar
- 100ml (3½fl oz) whipping cream
- 1½ tbsp butter
- 1 vanilla pod, scraped out seeds
- 200g (7oz) flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsp cornflour
- 1 small ripe banana
- a pinch of salt
- 3 free-range eggs

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 150g (5oz) unsalted butter
- 350g (12oz) icing sugar
- a few drops of vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

- 250g (9oz) white sugarpaste
- icing sugar
- 1 black food colour pen
- 400-500g (14-18oz) red sugarpaste
- 300-400g (11-14oz) black sugarpaste
- silver food colouring, paste or powder

For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.

Put 125g (4½oz) sugar, the cream and butter into a pan and bring to a boil. Add the seeds from the vanilla pod and simmer over a low heat for 5 minutes, then cool to lukewarm.

- 3 Mix together the flour, baking powder and cornflour.
- 4 Peel and mash the banana and whisk into the vanilla cream with the remaining sugar and the salt.
- 5 Beat in the eggs. Quickly stir in the flour mixture.

- 6 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 25 minutes until risen and golden. Cool in the tin for a few minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 For the buttercream, beat the butter until very soft. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
- 8 Spread the buttercream on top of the cakes.
- 9 To decorate, roll out the white sugarpaste quite thickly on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out 12 rectangles. Reserve the trimmings. Paint the rectangles in a chequerboard pattern using the colouring pen. Set aside to dry.
- 10 Roll 12 balls of red sugarpaste into cone shapes, keeping one end a little thicker. Flatten the sides, front and back to form car shapes. Make an indentation for the seat area with a wooden spoon handle. Make indentations on the front with a cocktail stick.
- 11 Mould 12 pieces of red sugarpaste to fit onto the backs of the cars, as in the photo, and attach with a dab of water.
- 12 Roll out the black sugarpaste thickly and cut out one large pair and one small pair of wheels for each car. Brush the centres with silver colouring. Set aside to dry.
- 13 Insert cocktail sticks into the wheels and insert into the sides of the cars.
- 14 Place the chequerboard sugarpaste on the cakes. Place the cars carefully on top.
- 15 Cut 12 small teardrop shapes from the reserved white sugarpaste and attach them to the front of the cars with a dab of water. Leave to dry.





## Bumble bee cupcakes

Makes 12-15

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 175ml (6fl oz) milk
- 80ml (3fl oz) sunflower oil
- 55ml (2fl oz) honey
- 2 tsp grated lemon zest
- 1 free-range egg
- 225g (8oz) plain flour
- 3 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

### FOR THE GLAZE

- 2 tbsp honey
- 2 tsp lemon juice

### TO DECORATE

- 250g (9oz) yellow sugarpaste
- icing sugar
- 36-45 strips of soft black liquorice
- 125g (4½oz) white sugarpaste
- 24-30 small flat liquorice sweets
- 12-15 small thin sticks of dry spaghetti
- 25g (1oz) black sugarpaste

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in 12-15 holes of one or two muffin tins.
- 2 Beat together the milk, oil, honey, lemon zest and egg in a mixing bowl. Sift in the dry ingredients and mix until just combined. Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden.
- 3 For the glaze, mix together the honey and lemon juice and heat gently until melted. Brush over the warm cakes. Place on a wire rack to cool.
- 4 To decorate, roll out the yellow sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out rounds with a scalloped edged cutter, the same diameter as the cakes.
- 5 Press the sugarpaste rounds onto the cakes.
- 6 Arrange three liquorice strips across each cake, cutting to fit.
- 7 Cut the liquorice trimmings into semi circles for the mouths and press into the cakes.
- 8 Roll out the white sugarpaste as before and cut out 24-30 small discs for the eyes and 24-30 for the wings.
- 9 Attach to the cakes, as in the photo, with a dab of water.
- 10 Press a liquorice sweet into each eye.
- 11 Gently mould tiny pieces of black sugarpaste around one end of the spaghetti sticks
- 12 Insert two spaghetti sticks into each cake for the antennae and leave to dry.



## Fondant cake cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

150g (5oz) butter  
150g (5oz) caster sugar  
3 free-range eggs  
1 tsp strawberry extract  
150g (5oz) self-raising flour

### FOR THE STRAWBERRY BUTTERCREAM

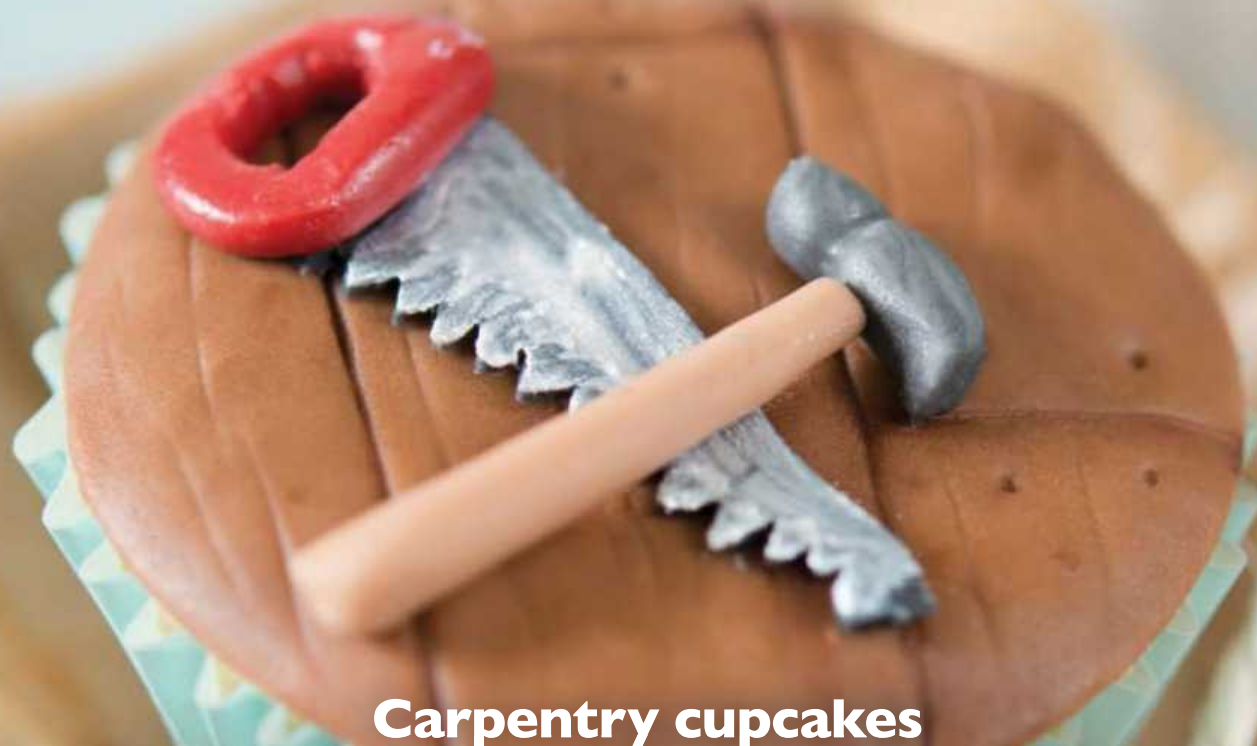
300g (1 lb) icing sugar  
80g (3oz) unsalted butter  
4 tbsp strawberry coulis  
½ tbsp double cream

### TO DECORATE

120g (4oz) light brown sugarpaste  
icing sugar  
120g (4oz) white sugarpaste  
120g (4oz) pink sugarpaste  
coloured sugar strands  
small pink sweets

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy.
- 3 Gradually beat in the eggs and strawberry extract, beating until fully incorporated into the mixture.
- 4 Sift in the flour and gently stir into the mixture.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the strawberry buttercream, beat the butter until soft. Sift in the icing sugar and add the strawberry coulis and cream. Beat well until smooth and creamy.
- 7 Spread the buttercream on the cakes.
- 8 To decorate, roll 24 pieces of brown sugarpaste into small rounds (for the doughnuts) and 36 small cone shapes. Remove the centres of the rounds and flatten slightly. Pinch the cone shapes to resemble an ice cream cone.
- 9 Roll out the white sugarpaste thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out 24 irregular rounds for the icing and attach to the doughnuts with a dab of water. Press in sugar strands.
- 10 Roll 36 small balls of white sugarpaste and pinch in the centre, to form ice cream shapes.
- 11 Roll tiny balls of pink sugarpaste (four for each cone) and attach to the brown cones with a little water. Attach the white balls on top with a dab of water. Press a pink sweet in the top of each.
- 12 Place the sugarpaste treats on top of the cakes.





## Carpentry cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

300g (11oz) self-raising flour

40g (1½oz) cocoa powder

½ tsp bicarbonate of soda

180g (6oz) caster sugar

375ml (13fl oz) buttermilk

2 free-range eggs

150g (5oz) butter, melted

### TO DECORATE

3-4 tbsp chocolate spread

250g (9oz) light brown chocolate sugarpaste

icing sugar

150g (5oz) ivory sugarpaste

250g (9oz) grey sugarpaste

75g (2½oz) red sugarpaste

edible silver lustre powder

- 3 Whisk the buttermilk with the eggs and pour into the dry ingredients. Add the melted butter and fold in gently until just combined. The mixture will be lumpy.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Remove from the tin and place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 Spread a thin layer of chocolate spread on each cake.
- 6 To decorate, roll out the light brown sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut rounds the same diameter as the cakes.
- 7 Press the sugarpaste rounds on the cakes and make the markings with a cocktail stick.
- 8 Roll 12 pieces of ivory sugarpaste into logs for the hammer handles, making one end thicker. Set aside.
- 9 Roll out the grey sugarpaste thinly and cut out 12 small rectangles. Cut small V shapes along one edge to make the saw markings. Brush with silver lustre powder.
- 10 Mould 12 small pieces of grey sugarpaste into hammer heads and brush with silver lustre powder.
- 11 Roll out the red sugarpaste into a thick round. Cut out 12 irregular oblongs and remove the centres.
- 12 Arrange the pieces on the cakes, as in the photo, to look like tools. Leave to dry.

1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.

2 Sift the flour, cocoa and bicarbonate of soda into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar.



## Playing card cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

110g (4oz) butter  
110g (4oz) caster sugar  
½ tsp vanilla extract  
2 free-range eggs  
finely grated zest of 1  
unwaxed lemon  
175g (6oz) plain flour

2 tsp baking powder

100ml (3½ fl oz) plain yoghurt

### TO DECORATE

3-4 tbsp apricot jam, warmed  
300g (1 lb) green sugarpaste  
icing sugar  
250g (9oz) white sugarpaste  
red and black food colour pens

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy.
- 3 Beat in the vanilla, eggs and lemon zest.
- 4 Sift in the flour and baking powder and gently fold into the mixture with the yoghurt, until well combined.
- 5 Spoon into the tin and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 To decorate, brush the tops of the cakes with warmed jam.
- 7 Roll out the green sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar and cut out 12 rounds, the same diameter as the cakes. Press on top of the cakes.
- 8 Roll out the white sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar into a thick rectangle. Cut out 24 small card shapes. Set them aside to harden.
- 9 Draw the symbols and numbers on the cards with food colouring pens and set aside to dry.
- 10 Place two cards on the top of each cake.



## Golf cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

225g (8oz) self-raising flour  
110g (4oz) butter  
110g (4oz) sugar  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
50g (1¾oz) pistachios,  
roughly chopped  
1 free-range egg, beaten  
½-1 tbsp milk

### TO DECORATE

3-4 tbsp apricot jam, warmed  
250g (9oz) green sugarpaste  
icing sugar  
110g (4oz) red sugarpaste  
110g (4oz) white sugarpaste  
black food colouring paste

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Sift the flour into a bowl and rub in the butter until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar, cinnamon and pistachios.
- 3 Beat in the egg and enough milk to give a stiff dropping consistency.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 15-20 minutes until golden and a skewer or cocktail inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 To decorate, brush the tops of the cakes with jam.
- 6 Roll out the green sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out 12 rounds larger than the diameter of the cakes. Press on top of the cakes, to overlap the sides.
- 7 Roll out the red sugarpaste as before and cut out flag shapes. Mould the flags around the tops of white straws.
- 8 Roll the white trimmings into tiny balls and attach to the cakes with a dab of water.
- 9 Knead black food colouring into the remaining white sugarpaste and press out 12 small discs. Place on the cakes and insert the flagpoles into the cakes, through the discs.



## Wizard of Oz cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

150g (5oz) unsalted butter

150g (5oz) caster sugar

3 free-range eggs

1 tsp vanilla extract

150g (5oz) self-raising flour

50g (1½oz) desiccated coconut

3-4 tbsp blackcurrant jam

### FOR THE TOPPING

280g (10oz) icing sugar, more if needed

85g (3oz) unsalted butter

2 tbsp coconut cream

### TO DECORATE

100g (3½oz) yellow sugarpaste

icing sugar

### FOR THE SHOES

200-400g (7-14oz) dark red gumpaste

edible glue

edible red glitter

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs and the vanilla, beating until they are fully incorporated.
- 3 Sift in the flour and gently stir into the mixture with the coconut.
- 4 Spoon into the tins to half fill them. Top each with a teaspoonful of jam and cover with the remaining mixture.
- 5 Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the topping, beat together all the ingredients until light and fluffy. Add more icing sugar if the mixture is too thin.
- 7 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cake.
- 8 Roll out the yellow sugarpaste thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut 12 strips and mark with a knife for the yellow brick road.
- 9 Place on the cakes.
- 10 Press 12 pieces of red gumpaste into small silicone shoe moulds. Leave to set or freeze briefly until set. Press out of the mould and brush lightly with edible glue.
- 11 Place the shoes on a piece of non-stick baking paper and sprinkle with glitter, to coat all over. Leave to dry.
- 12 Shape 12 small bows from the remaining gumpaste, brush with glue and coat completely with glitter. Leave to dry.
- 13 Attach the bows to the shoes with a dab of glue.
- 14 Place a shoe on each cake, attaching to the yellow sugarpaste with a little glue. Sprinkle the cakes lightly with glitter.



## Lion cupcakes

Makes 15

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 2 free-range eggs
- 175g (6oz) caster sugar
- 150ml (5fl oz) sunflower oil
- 200g (7oz) self-raising flour
- 2 tsp mixed spice
- 2 small carrots, coarsely grated
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 140g (5oz) butter
- 280g (10oz) icing sugar
- 1-2 tbsp whipping cream
- a few drops of vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

- 400-500g (14-18oz) yellow sugarpaste
- icing sugar
- 250g (9oz) light brown sugarpaste
- 150g (5oz) dark chocolate sugarpaste

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place 15 paper cases in two muffin tins.
- 2 Put the eggs, sugar and oil in a large bowl and beat with an electric whisk for 2-3 minutes until light and fluffy. Gently fold in the flour, spice, grated carrots and vanilla, until thoroughly combined.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until well risen and golden brown. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the buttercream, beat the butter until soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
- 5 Add 1 tbsp cream and the vanilla and beat until creamy and smooth. Beat in the remaining cream if necessary, to loosen the mixture. Spread on the cakes.
- 6 To decorate, roll out yellow sugarpaste thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar and cut out petals, using a large petal cutter and a smaller one. You need about 20 large petals and 8-10 smaller petals for each cake. Arrange the large petals on the cake as shown. Brush the smaller petals lightly with water and attach to the larger petals.
- 7 Roll out the light brown sugarpaste thickly and cut out 12 small discs for the faces. Make the facial markings with a cocktail stick.
- 8 Shape 24 small pieces of dark brown sugarpaste into ear shapes and attach to the top of the discs with a little water.
- 9 Roll 12 small balls of dark brown sugarpaste for the noses and attach to the faces with a dab of water.
- 10 Roll tiny balls of paste for the eyes and attach to the cakes.





## Ball of wool cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**175g (6oz) butter**

**175g (6oz) caster sugar**

**2 free-range eggs**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

**225g (8oz) plain flour**

**2 tsp baking powder**

**125ml (4½ fl oz) plain yoghurt**

**175g (6oz) desiccated coconut**

### TO DECORATE

**400-500g (14-18oz) lilac sugarpaste**

**3-4 tbsp apricot jam, warmed**

**white vegetable shortening**

**water**

**edible glue**

**250g (9oz) white sugarpaste**

**icing sugar**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place 12 paper cases in a 12-hole deep bun or muffin tin.
- 2** Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs and vanilla.
- 3** Sift in the flour and baking powder and gently fold into the mixture with the yoghurt, until well combined. Stir in the coconut.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and springy. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** To decorate, roll out half the lilac sugarpaste thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out small rounds the same diameter as the cakes. Brush the tops of the cakes with a little apricot jam and attach the sugarpaste rounds.
- 6** Knead a little vegetable shortening and a few drops of water into the remaining lilac sugarpaste.
- 7** Load a sugarcraft gun fitted with the medium round disc with the sugarpaste and push out long strings of sugarpaste and lay them close together on non-stick baking paper.
- 8** Attach the strings to the cakes, in opposite directions as in the photo, with edible glue.
- 9** Roll 24 small balls of white sugarpaste and glue them to the end of wooden barbecue sticks with edible glue.
- 10** Mould the remaining white sugarpaste around the sticks and insert into the cakes. Leave to dry.



## Camper van cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

225g (8oz) self-raising flour  
175g (6oz) caster sugar  
finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed lemon  
1 tbsp ground almonds  
3 free-range eggs  
100ml (3½ fl oz) soured cream  
175g (6oz) butter, melted and cooled

### TO DECORATE

250-300g (9-11 oz) blue sugarpaste  
3-4 tbsp apricot jam, warmed  
250g (9oz) white sugarpaste  
200g (7oz) orange sugarpaste  
100g (3½oz) yellow sugarpaste  
110g (4oz) red sugarpaste  
50-60g (1¾-2oz) dark blue sugarpaste  
icing sugar

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Mix together the flour, sugar, zest and almonds in a mixing bowl.
- 3 Beat the eggs into the soured cream, then pour into the dry ingredients with the melted butter. Beat until smooth.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes. Test to see if they are done by inserting a skewer or cocktail stick, it should come out clean. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 To decorate, roll out the blue sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out rounds with a scalloped edged cutter, the same diameter as the cakes. Reserve the trimmings.
- 6 Brush the tops of the cakes with a little apricot jam and attach the sugarpaste rounds.
- 7 Roll the white, orange and red sugarpastes separately, as before.
- 8 Cut 12 rectangles to fit on top of the cakes from the white sugarpaste and 12 tiny rectangles.
- 9 Cut out 12 squares of orange sugarpaste and cut a V shape from the top of each. Brush lightly with water and attach to the white rectangles, as in the photo.
- 10 Cut out 12 discs of orange sugarpaste and attach to the rectangles, with a dab of water, as in the photo.
- 11 Cut 12 thin strips of red sugarpaste, brush lightly with water and attach to the base of the orange sugarpaste.
- 12 Attach the tiny white rectangles in the centre of the strips, as in the photo.
- 13 Roll 24 small balls and 24 tiny balls of yellow sugarpaste. Flatten the larger balls slightly and attach with a dab of water. Attach the tiny balls, as in the photo.
- 14 Cut 24 small rectangles of blue sugarpaste from the reserved trimmings and attach with a little water, for the windows.
- 15 Roll 24 small pieces of dark blue sugarpaste into thick sausage shapes and attach to the cakes, on either side of the red strips. Leave to dry.





Photos of Debbie © Adel Hanna

Debbie Wingham is an internationally renowned haute couturier and a celebrity gown designer, and also designs cakes under the company name Couture To Cakes. She has been described as the new Nigella of cake artistry and has made cakes for the *Downton Abbey* cast and Amanda Holden to name a couple. To find out more about Debbie and her beautiful cakes, visit [www.couturetocakes.com](http://www.couturetocakes.com) and [www.debbiewingham.co.uk](http://www.debbiewingham.co.uk)

# Cupcake diaries of a *couturier*

Debbie Wingham taps into the trend for outlandish Christmas jumpers to make wild, woolly cupcakes.

Once upon a time, Crimbo day jumpers would be an absolute no-no! A fashion faux pas, but now stocked in every department store they have been transformed into an absolute Christmas must-have!

At the last event I went to, a few members of the fashion glitterati were even rocking one in early December, shock horror!

Don't get me wrong, I love Christmas and put my decorations up increasingly early every year. I say it's for the kids, but, just between us, it is ever-so-slightly a selfish thing.

So for the Christmas edition of my column, which has to be a fusion of the season, fashion and pudshires, I just had to opt for the Christmas day jumper cupcake!

It's bang on trend, fun to do with the whole family and these days giving homemade gifts is tooooooo chic. There is a recession on, but that's not why, I just think homemade gifts require real effort and Christmas shopping can be done in two seconds online, click-n-buy...

done. 'A' for effort? I think not!

I love these cupcakes because they are not only delicious, but the design aesthetic is limited to your imagination. I have touched upon a few concepts to get your creative juices flowing, but really these could evolve a lot – you could even personalise and draw or paint a Christmas scene, or get the kids to. Swap normal paper for fondant or rice paper and get the edible pens out – Rainbow Dust ([www.rainbowdust.co.uk](http://www.rainbowdust.co.uk)) do some fabulous edible ink pens of different widths. So cute to have a kiddies Christmas scene drawn by them, especially as a gift to school friends, grandparents etc.

If time is an issue, which around the festive season it often is, you could even get printed Christmas scenes from companies specialising in edible printing. I always buy from Cakey Bake ([www.cakeybake.co.uk](http://www.cakeybake.co.uk)) – they are £4 per A4 sheet and you can fit a lot of styles on there – it works out as just pennies per pud!

These cakes can be as detailed or as simple as you like, they are most effective and suitable for cupcake decorating newbies or, for those more advanced, you can add a little more va-va-voom to your designs.

These cupcakes are a fusion of two cakes and I suggest a skinny cupcake – not overflowing, just flat – as the pudding platform, and the jumper is created by using chocolate cake that you sculpt into shape.



## Chocolate cupcake

- 4 tbsp boiling water
- 40g (1½oz) cocoa powder
- 3 free-range eggs
- 175g (6¼oz) unsalted butter, softened
- 165g (6oz) unrefined golden caster sugar (we use Billington's)
- 115g (4oz) self-raising white flour (we use Allinson)
- 1 tsp baking powder

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Line a 12-hole cupcake tin with paper cases. Sift cocoa powder into a bowl, pour in boiling water and mix into a paste. Add the remaining ingredients, sifting the flour and baking powder, and mix with an electric hand mixer or beat with a wooden spoon.
- 2 Divide the mixture between the cases equally. Bake in the oven for about 10 minutes, until well risen and so that the sponge is springy to the touch. Cool on a wire rack.

### SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Christmas inspired cases or colour palette  
Fondant in your favourite Christmas shades  
Petal paste for the odd details  
Small brush  
Food safe sponge  
Lustre dust in various colours  
Metallic gold Rainbow Dust paint  
Wooden toothpicks/skewers  
Claire Bowman Christmas mats  
FMM Christmas cutters  
Embossing rolling pins and so on...

## Chocolate ganache cream

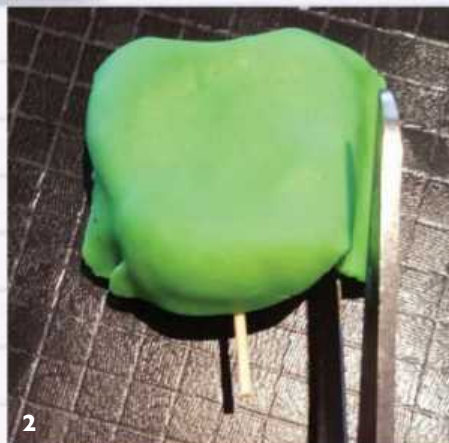
- 200g (7oz) dark chocolate
- 65g (2¼oz) double cream
- TO SPICE UP THE GANACHE...**
- a drop of Baileys for the adults or
- a drop of peppermint essence for delicious mint choc heaven

- 1 Melt the chocolate with a bain-marie method. Once the chocolate is fully melted and smooth and glossy, take off the heat and set aside for a moment, then add the double cream and mix with a wooden spoon until combined. The mixture is ready to use within moments and it makes it easier to combine the cake crumbs.

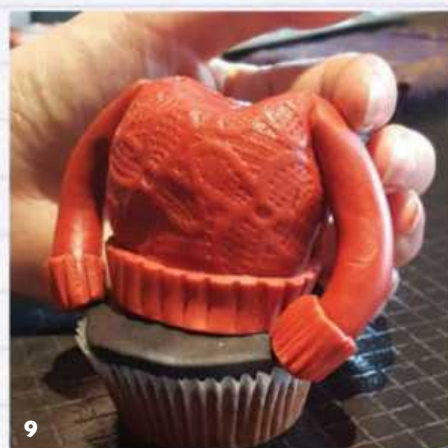
## Marshmallow

- 62.5g (2¼oz) icing sugar, for dusting
- 200g (7oz) caster sugar
- ½ tbsp golden syrup
- 250ml (9fl oz) water, divided
- 2 tbsp unflavoured powdered gelatine
- 1 free-range egg
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

- 1 Dust a 23cm (9in) square dish generously with icing sugar.
- 2 In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, stir together caster sugar, golden syrup and 175ml (6fl oz) water. Heat to 120-130°C, or until a small amount of syrup dropped into cold water forms a rigid ball.
- 3 While the syrup is heating, place the remaining water in a metal bowl and sprinkle gelatine over the surface. Place the bowl over simmering water until the gelatine has dissolved completely. Keep in a warm place until the syrup has come to temperature. Remove the syrup from the heat and whisk the gelatine mixture into the hot syrup. Set aside.
- 4 In a separate large mixing bowl, whip the egg whites to soft peaks. Continue to beat, pouring syrup mixture into the egg whites in a thin stream, until the egg whites are very stiff. Stir in the vanilla. Put the mixture into a piping bag and then you are ready to start your snow scene. You can either do marshmallow as the foundation of the cupcake or add it after the torso – after the torso is more of an organic snow scene.







## Christmas jumper cupcakes

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**chocolate cupcakes (made using the recipe on page 71)**

**200g (7oz) leftover cake**

**one portion chocolate ganache (recipe on page 71)**

**marshmallow (optional, recipe on page 71)**

### CHOCOLATE MOUSSE SCULPTING MIX

- 1** The foundation of this method is you reduce your leftover cake to a crumb by rubbing and flaking. I often save spare cake when I bake – I flake, then freeze. To the cake flakes or crumbs (defrost if frozen), I suggest using chocolate ganache as the frosting/yummy bonding agent. You mix it by mixing it into the crumbs with a spoon, then by hand, very much like when combining a pastry/biscuit mix. You will know when you have a good consistency, because it won't be too wet and all crumbs will form a shape and retain it.
- 2** You can now sculpt the shapes of a torso (pic 1 on page 71). Remember that you will be putting fondant over the jumper body structure, so be mindful that this adds bulk. I would suggest placing the body structure on top of the skinny cupcake as you go in order to keep to scale. The approximate height of the torso is 5cm (2in) tall and 3cm (1 1/2in) wide. At this time you will only do the upper body, no arms, because we will make them later, from fondant or modelling chocolate, whichever you prefer.

- 3** Once the torso is sculpted, use your thumb to create a neck shape.
- 4** Cut out the centre of the skinny cupcake and fill with ganache, then crumb coat the top for a smooth surface for either the fondant or marshmallow to go on.
- 5** Cover in fondant or emboss and then cover in fondant, dependent upon the style you really want to do. If you want to do a snow scene, pipe your homemade marshmallow, no need for fondant, and using both would be too sickly.
- 6** You are now ready to cover the torso in fondant (pic 2). It's easy to do, just cover with sides open and trim the excess off, then neaten with a fondant tool to close the seams.
- 7** You can then add whatever Christmas scene you want, whether it's embossed, moulded, hand painted, fondant printed, etc. If, like me, you would like to add the vintage gold distressed effect, use a food safe sponge, dab it into metallic paint and dab on sporadically (pic 3 on page 71).





**8** Arms are created by rolling a thin sausage-like shape of fondant and cutting the shoulder part at an angle.

**9** These should be attached by using a small dab of water on the shoulder area and adhering the arm and torso together. I know a lot of people use skewers, but where possible it's better to avoid inedible things I always think. If you do decide to use them, please state on the tag if you gift these, or make sure it's clear to anyone who eats one.

**10** To create cuffing around the wrist and the bottom of the sweater use a skewer. Roll a long thin piece of fondant, cut it in a straight line top and bottom and use the skewer to emboss, equal distances apart, to create a realistic look (pic 9).

**11** For the finer details, you need a fine brush and metallic paint to highlight the collar, cuff detail and any other accents you use.

**12** For those of you who like to show off – that would be me! – then why not add a pair of hands holding a snowball and a head with facial features and accessories? You can even use homemade marshmallow to decorate around the torso, as if the person is stuck in the snow! Depends if you have the time, but if it's worth doing it's worth overdoing I always say. I opted for totally different stylisation of the entire half-body cupcakes, went a bit more fashion and slightly less Christmas, but this is down to the individual really, what tools you have and also what event/gift you are making them for. I even did funky coloured hair, designer shades and high turtle necks. This would also translate well to the skiing set and do ski shades – fabulous!

### FOR THE CHRISTMAS JUMPER WITH HEAD AND HANDS (PIC 10)

- 1** Mix a fondant shade of your choice for the skin colour of the face.
- 2** Either use a face mould if you have one or you can roll a face like shape. I chose something a bit more cartoon-like, because I thought it was more of a fun cupcake instead of high fashion influence.
- 3** Once you have a face, cut eye shapes out of petal paste and attach. Use a fine brush and food colouring or an edible ink pen to draw the eye details, along with lips and eyebrows, or you can do these in the same fondant colour as the hair, should you wish.
- 4** Make a hand – I just did one and had the other one in the snow. The best way to do a hand is using a sharp blade to cut a small rectangle shape, then cut in the fingers. Shorten the little finger and the thumb and separate the thumb slightly to look more hand-like. Use a skewer to hold the hand inside the cuff. Turn the hand upwards and pipe a ball of your marshmallow in it to resemble a snowball.
- 5** For attaching the head, pinch a tiny bit of fondant and adhere it with a dab of water to the centre, then wrap around the turtle neck collar. The collar is created by the same method as the cuffs and bottom of the sweater, using a skewer to create cuffing. Pop the head on top and add hair, a winter hat or whatever look you are going for. All other details are custom to your own thoughts, so hair colour, jumper details and so on are up to you.

### FILLERS FOR INBETWEEN

- 1** If you're planning on gifting a number of these cupcakes, you could put a more detailed one in the middle of the group and the others could be simpler cupcakes, as these upper body ones are quite intricate.
- 2** Claire Bowman ([www.cakelace.co.uk](http://www.cakelace.co.uk)) stocks a lot of festive design cake lace mats. If you run out of cake lace mix over the festive season, don't stress, as you can always do my favourite trick, which is to rub the matt a little in Trex and then roll fondant straight on the mat (pic 6). Sponge it with gold metallic paint and it looks impressive but takes just moments (pic 7). I chose to use the vintage effect gold sponge throughout all my designs, so it was really in keeping with the aesthetic.
- 3** Another quick but uber-nice effect is the acetate mat with lustre dust powder. Lakeland ([www.lakeland.co.uk](http://www.lakeland.co.uk)) stock a vast range and they are cheap. Even if they aren't festive prints you can choose to use a Christmas colour palette. You roll the fondant place mat over the top, roll back and forth once, rub with lustre powder and peel off the mat. Cut the circle discs for the cupcake tops and voilà, you have instantly fabulous cupcakes.



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# Indulgent

CUPCAKES







## Marshmallow crispy cupcakes

By Dr Oetker ([www.oetker.co.uk](http://www.oetker.co.uk))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**300g (10½oz) Dr. Oetker Heart Marshmallows – 3 packets, chopped small**

**1 tsp Dr. Oetker Madagascan Vanilla Extract**

**100g (3½oz) unsalted butter, cubed**

**150g (5oz) toasted rice cereal**

**Dr. Oetker Pink Easy Swirl Cupcake Icing, enough for the cupcakes (180g (6oz) per can)**

- 1 Snip 250g (9oz) of Dr. Oetker Heart Marshmallows into small pieces with a pair of kitchen scissors.
- 2 Grease two silicone muffin tins with a little butter.
- 3 Place the marshmallows, vanilla extract and cubed butter into a medium saucepan. Put the toasted rice cereal into a large bowl.
- 4 Cook over medium heat, stirring with a hand whisk, until the butter and marshmallows have melted.
- 5 Pour the melted marshmallows into the cereal and stir together using a large spatula, until the cereal is completely coated.
- 6 Spoon into the prepared muffin tins and press down with the back of a spoon to pack them down.
- 7 Chill in the fridge until set – 30 minutes to an hour.
- 8 Gently remove the cupcakes from the tins and frost with Dr. Oetker Easy Swirl Vanilla Cupcake Icing.
- 9 Add a marshmallow on top of each cupcake as decoration.



## Sticky toffee cupcakes

By Dr Oetker ([www.oetker.co.uk](http://www.oetker.co.uk))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**150g (5oz) dates, pitted, finely chopped**

**1 tbsp treacle**

**115g (4oz) unsalted butter**

**75g (3oz) light brown sugar**

**1 tsp Dr. Oetker Select Vanilla Extract with Seeds**

**2 medium free-range eggs, beaten**

**115g (4oz) self-raising flour**

**1 tsp Dr. Oetker Bicarbonate of Soda**

**100g (3½oz) Dr. Oetker Fudge Chunks**

### TO DECORATE

**125g (4½oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**225g (8oz) icing sugar**

**1 tsp Dr. Oetker Caramel Flavour**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Line a muffin tin with 12 Dr. Oetker Muffin Cases. Put the dates in a saucepan with 150ml (5fl oz) water. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer gently for about 5 minutes until soft and pulpy. Remove from the heat, stir in the treacle and mix well. Leave to cool.
- 2 In a mixing bowl, beat the butter and sugar until creamy in texture. Stir in the date mixture and vanilla extract and whisk in the eggs.
- 3 Sift the flour and bicarbonate of soda on top. Add 50g (2oz) fudge chunks and carefully mix together until well blended.
- 4 Divide between the cases and bake for 22-25 minutes until risen and just firm to the touch. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Wrap and store for 24 hours to allow flavour and texture to develop. A sticky layer forms at the cake base, while the top is light and spongy.
- 5 To decorate, place the butter in a bowl and beat until soft. Sift and mix in the icing sugar to make a smooth, creamy icing. Mix in the caramel flavour. Spread a generous amount of icing on each cake using a small palette knife and top with the remaining fudge pieces.

**TIP** For an extra smooth sponge, purée the date mixture in a blender.



## Chocolate chip cookie cupcakes

By Dr Oetker ([www.oetker.co.uk](http://www.oetker.co.uk))

Makes 12

### FOR THE COOKIE DOUGH

**100g (3½oz) unsalted butter**

**75g (3oz) caster sugar**

**1 medium free-range egg yolk**

**1 tsp Dr. Oetker Caramel Flavour**

**125g (4½oz) plain flour**

**1 tsp Dr. Oetker Baking Powder (1 sachet)**

**100g (3½oz) Dr. Oetker Dark Chocolate Chips, plus extra to decorate**

### FOR THE CAKE MIX

**150g (5oz) margarine**

**150g (5oz) caster sugar**

**1 tsp Dr. Oetker Madagascan Vanilla Paste**

**3 medium free-range eggs, beaten**

**150g (5oz) plain flour**

**25g (1oz) Dr. Oetker Fine Dark Cocoa Powder (1 sachet)**

**2 tsp Dr. Oetker Baking Powder (2 sachets)**

### TO DECORATE

**150g (5oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**275g (9½oz) icing sugar**

**1 tsp Dr. Oetker Madagascan Vanilla Extract**

- 1 First make the cookie mixture. Line a large baking tray with baking parchment. In a bowl, beat together the butter and sugar until creamy and well blended. Beat in the egg yolk and caramel flavour.
- 2 Sift the flour and baking powder on top and add the chocolate chips. Mix together to form a fairly firm dough.
- 3 Form 200g (7oz) of dough into 12 balls the size of large marbles. Put on a lined plate, cover and chill until required. These are used in the cake mix. Divide the remaining dough into 20 small pieces and form into balls. Place on the baking tray, spaced a little apart and chill until needed. These are baked into mini cookies for decoration.
- 4 Now make the cake mixture. Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with muffin cases.
- 5 Put the margarine, sugar, vanilla extract and eggs in a bowl. Sift the flour, cocoa powder and baking powder on top and whisk all the ingredients together until well blended.
- 6 Spoon half the mix into the cases and push a large marble-sized ball of cookie dough into the centre of each. Spoon over the remaining cake mix to cover the cookie dough. Bake for 22-24 minutes until risen and just firm to the touch. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.
- 7 Raise the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Bake the remaining dough balls for 10-12 minutes until light golden. Put on a wire rack to cool.
- 8 For the buttercream, put the butter in a bowl and beat until smooth. Sift and beat in the icing sugar until smooth and creamy. Mix in the vanilla extract. Spread generous amounts of buttercream on each cake and decorate with choc chips. Press a mini cookie into each cake to serve, and put the remaining cookies on the side.





## Irish coffee cupcakes

By Dr Oetker ([www.oetker.co.uk](http://www.oetker.co.uk))

12 cupcakes

**1 tbsp instant coffee granules**

**150g (5oz) margarine**

**150g (5oz) dark brown sugar**

**3 medium free-range eggs**

**25g (1oz) Dr. Oetker Fine Dark Cocoa Powder (1 sachet)**

**165g (5½oz) plain flour**

**2 tsp Dr. Oetker Baking Powder (2 sachets)**

**140g (5oz) Dr. Oetker Surprise Inside Cupcake Centres  
Salted Caramel (1 pouch)**

**60ml (2fl oz) whisky**

### TO DECORATE

**200ml (7fl oz) double cream**

**52g (1¾oz) Dr. Oetker Salted Caramel Crunch**

**Dr. Oetker Giant Chocolate Stars**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Put muffin cases in a 12-hole muffin tin. Put the coffee granules in a small heatproof dish and spoon over 10ml (2 tsp) boiling water. Stir to dissolve and set aside.
- 2** Put the margarine in a mixing bowl with the brown sugar. Whisk together until creamy and lighter in texture and colour.
- 3** Gradually beat in the eggs until well blended. Sift the cocoa powder, flour and baking powder on top and using a large metal spoon, carefully fold the flour into the whisked ingredients along with the coffee liquid.
- 4** Divide the mixture equally between the cake cases and smooth over the tops. Bake for about 20 minutes until risen and just firm to the touch.
- 5** As soon as the cakes are cooked, generously inject each one with Surprise Inside Caramel Cupcake Centre, making sure the nozzle goes right into the centre of each cake. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Skewer each cake with a cocktail stick and drizzle each one with 5ml (1 tsp) whisky.
- 6** To decorate, just before serving, pour the cream into a bowl and whisk gently until softly peaking. Thickly spread on top of each cake, sprinkle with salted caramel crunch and decorate with giant chocolate stars. Your cocktail cupcakes are now ready to serve.



## Cinnamon eggnog and bourbon cupcakes

By Betsy Eves from JavaCupcake ([JavaCupcake.com](http://JavaCupcake.com))

Makes 18

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

310g (11oz) flour  
 ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
 ½ tsp baking powder  
 ½ tsp salt  
 ¼ tsp nutmeg  
 ½ tsp cinnamon  
 75ml (3fl oz) bourbon whiskey  
 290ml (10fl oz) cinnamon eggnog  
 60ml (2fl oz) canola oil  
 1 tbsp vinegar  
 1 tsp vanilla extract  
 230g (8oz) sugar

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

115g (4oz) cream cheese, at room temperature  
 115g (4oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
 680g (1lb 8oz) icing sugar  
 2 tbsp bourbon whiskey  
 a large pinch of cinnamon  
 1-2 tbsp cinnamon eggnog  
 a large pinch of salt  
 nutmeg, to garnish

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a cupcake tin with cases.
- 2 In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, bicarbonate of soda, baking powder, salt, nutmeg and cinnamon. Set aside.
- 3 In an electric mixer bowl, combine the bourbon, eggnog, oil, vinegar, vanilla and sugar on medium speed until smooth (3-4 minutes).

- 4 Add the flour and mix on low speed, just until all the flour is wet.
- 5 Stop the mixer; scrape the sides with a spatula and ensure the flour is incorporated. This should only take 2-3 strokes. Don't overmix.
- 6 Fill the cupcake cases two-thirds full.
- 7 Bake for 18-20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean from the centre of the cupcake.
- 8 Allow to cool in the tin for 3-4 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 1 In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream together the cream cheese and butter until smooth. Scrape the sides of the bowl.
- 2 One half cup at a time, add half the icing sugar and beat until smooth between each addition.
- 3 Scrape the sides of the bowl and add the whiskey, beat until combined. Sprinkle in the cinnamon and mix until incorporated.
- 4 One half cup at a time, add the remaining icing sugar and beat until smooth between each addition.
- 5 Add the eggnog until you get the consistency you desire. You may want more or less of the eggnog. Mix in the salt and beat until smooth, about 30 seconds.
- 6 Frost each cupcake and sprinkle with nutmeg to garnish.



## Jammie Dodger cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 170g (6oz) soft butter
- 175g (6oz) self-raising flour
- 175g (6oz) caster sugar
- a pinch of salt
- 2-3 tbsp milk
- 3 free-range eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 4-5 tbsp seedless jam, raspberry or strawberry

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 175g (6oz) unsalted butter
- 350g (12oz) icing sugar
- 225g (8oz) mascarpone
- a few drops of vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

- 4 tbsp jam
- 1 tbsp water
- 12 Jammy Dodger biscuits

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole deep bun or muffin tin.
- 2 Put the butter, flour, sugar and salt into a mixing bowl. Mix together using an electric whisk until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.
- 3 Mix together the milk, eggs and vanilla until smooth.
- 4 Slowly pour half of the egg mixture into the flour mixture and whisk until combined. Gradually add the remaining egg mixture, whisking constantly until smooth.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases to half fill them. Top each with a teaspoonful of jam and cover with the remaining mixture.
- 6 Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 For the topping, beat the butter until soft, then sift in the icing sugar. Gradually beat in the mascarpone and vanilla until smooth and creamy.
- 8 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls on top of the cakes.
- 9 Heat the jam and water until the jam has melted. Drizzle over the topping and place a jammy dodger on each cake.



## Popcorn cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) butter
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- 110g (4oz) self-raising flour
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

### FOR THE WHITE CHOCOLATE FROSTING

- 150g (5oz) white chocolate
- 250g (9oz) icing sugar
- 80g (3oz) unsalted butter
- 1 tbsp double cream

### TO DECORATE

#### popcorn

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 24-hole mini muffin tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs until well blended. Sift in the flour and fold in gently with the vanilla, until just combined.
- 3 Spoon into the cases and bake for about 10 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the white chocolate cream, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly.
- 5 Beat the butter and icing sugar until fluffy and pale, then beat in the cream and melted chocolate until smooth.
- 6 Spoon into a piping bag with a star nozzle and pipe on top of each cake, as in the photo. Decorate with popcorn.



## Almond cupcakes with amaretto buttercream

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 250g (9oz) plain flour
- 55g (2oz) ground almonds
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 2 free-range eggs
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar
- 80ml (3fl oz) sunflower oil
- ½ tsp almond extract
- 125ml (4½fl oz) plain yoghurt

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 225g (8oz) unsalted butter
- 400g (14oz) icing sugar
- 1-2 tbsp amaretto

### TO DECORATE

- toasted almonds, finely chopped
- 12 caramelised almonds

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Mix together the flour, ground almonds, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda in a bowl.
- 3 Whisk the eggs lightly in a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar, oil, almond extract and yoghurt and mix well.
- 4 Stir in the dry ingredients and stir until just combined.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the buttercream, beat the butter until very soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar, beating until smooth, then beat in the amaretto.
- 7 Spread the buttercream on top of the cupcakes and sprinkle toasted almonds on top. Place a caramelised almond in the centre of each cake.





## Mint julep cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 112g (4oz) soft butter
- 225g (8oz) sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp peppermint extract
- 2 free-range eggs
- 150g (5oz) plain flour
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- a pinch of salt
- 112ml (4fl oz) milk
- 112ml (4fl oz) bourbon

- 250g (9oz) ivory sugarpaste
- icing sugar
- bourbon, for brushing

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 112g (4oz) unsalted butter
- 200-300g (7-11oz) icing sugar
- ¼ tsp peppermint extract
- ½ tbsp bourbon
- 125ml (4½fl oz) double cream
- green food colouring paste

### TO DECORATE

- mint leaves
- glacé cherry halves

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place 12 paper cases in a 12-hole deep bun tin.
- 2 Sift together the salt, baking powder and half the flour. Set aside.
- 3 Beat together the butter, sugar, eggs and extracts in a mixing bowl until creamy.
- 4 Gradually beat in the flour mixture until just combined. Add the milk and bourbon followed by the remaining flour and mix until only just combined.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 25-30 minutes, until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 Roll out the sugarpaste thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out small rounds with a scallop edged cutter; the same diameter as the cakes.
- 7 Brush the tops of the cakes with a little bourbon and attach the sugarpaste rounds.
- 8 For the buttercream, beat the butter until creamy and pale. Gradually sift in the icing sugar until thick and smooth.
- 9 Add the peppermint extract and bourbon and then the cream, beating until thick and creamy. Add more icing sugar or cream if the mixture is too wet or dry. Beat in the food colouring.
- 10 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls on the cakes. Decorate with mint leaves and cherry halves.

# Lavender cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150g (5oz) caster sugar
- 2 tbsp dried lavender (use culinary grade if possible)
- 200g (7oz) plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- a pinch of salt
- 150ml (5fl oz) milk
- 110g (4oz) butter, melted
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tsp finely grated lemon zest
- 1 free-range egg

## FOR THE ICING

- 80ml (3fl oz) milk
- 1 tsp dried lavender
- 300g (11oz) icing sugar, more if needed
- violet food colouring paste

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Grind together the sugar and lavender in a food processor; then sift into a mixing bowl to remove any large pieces of lavender. Stir in the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt.
- 3 Whisk together the milk, lemon juice and zest until curdled and thickened slightly.
- 4 Whisk the egg with the butter and milk mixture.
- 5 Make a well in the centre of the flour mixture, pour in the egg mixture and stir until just combined.
- 6 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 For the icing, heat the milk and lavender just to a boil in a pan. Remove from the heat, cover and leave to stand for 10 minutes. Strain into a bowl and discard the lavender.
- 8 Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth and thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. Stir in the food colouring.
- 9 Spoon onto the top of the cakes and spread evenly. Decorate with dried lavender.







## Crème brûlée cupcakes with raspberries

Makes 12

### FOR THE CRÈME BRÛLÉE

450ml (16fl oz) milk

4 tbsp sugar, plus extra for sprinkling

1 cinnamon stick

3 free-range eggs

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

150g (5oz) butter

150g (5oz) sugar

3 free-range eggs

2 tsp vanilla extract

1 tsp ground cinnamon

150g (5oz) plain flour

¾ tsp baking powder

### TO DECORATE

raspberry purée

- 1 Line a shallow baking tin with non-stick baking paper.
- 2 For the crème brûlée, heat the milk, sugar and cinnamon stick in a pan and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and set aside for about 5 minutes to cool.
- 3 Beat the eggs into the mixture. Strain the mixture through a sieve into the baking tin and leave to cool. Chill until set.
- 4 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 5 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- 6 Beat in the vanilla and cinnamon, then stir in the flour and baking powder until well combined.
- 7 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until golden and risen. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 8 Cut out 12 discs of crème brûlée, slightly smaller than the diameter of the cakes. Place on top of the cakes.
- 9 Sprinkle with sugar and brown with a cook's blowtorch until the sugar has caramelised.
- 10 Top with raspberry purée.



## Toasted marshmallow cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

110g (4oz) butter

110g (4oz) caster sugar

2 free-range eggs, beaten

110g (4oz) self-raising flour

1 tsp vanilla extract

55g (2oz) white chocolate chips

### TO DECORATE

50g (1¾oz) mini marshmallows

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases into a 24-hole mini muffin tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs until well blended.
- 3 Sift in the flour and fold in gently with the vanilla and chocolate chips, until just combined.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 10-15 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Place onto a wire rack and leave to cool completely.
- 5 Heat the grill, or you can use a cook's blowtorch. Pile mini marshmallows on top of each cake and place under the grill (or use the blowtorch) until browned and starting to melt. Leave to cool.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

## Grand Marnier cupcakes

Makes 12-15

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 6 tbsp unsalted butter
- 175g (6oz) sugar
- 1 free-range egg
- 1 tbsp finely grated orange zest
- 1 tsp Grand Marnier
- 175g (6oz) plain flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- a pinch of salt
- 225ml (8fl oz) soured cream

### FOR THE WHITE FROSTING

- 4 free-range egg whites
- 110g (4oz) sugar
- 225g (8oz) unsalted butter, chopped
- 1-2 tbsp Grand Marnier

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 175g (6oz) unsalted butter
- 350g (12oz) icing sugar
- 2-3 tbsp Grand Marnier
- orange food colouring

### TO DECORATE

- cocoa powder
- chocolate discs
- chocolate shapes

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in 12-15 holes of a muffin tin.
- 2 Beat together the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, orange zest and Grand Marnier.

- 3 Stir together the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt.
- 4 Beat the soured cream into the butter mixture alternately with the flour mixture.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes, until firm to the touch. Cool in the tins for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the white frosting, whisk the egg whites with the sugar in a heatproof bowl until just combined. Place the bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water and whisk constantly until the mixture is very warm. Remove from the heat.
- 7 Whisk until stiff and glossy, then add the butter, a little at a time, beating until glossy and smooth. Add the Grand Marnier and beat until incorporated.
- 8 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a generous round in the centre of each cake.
- 9 For the orange buttercream, beat the butter until soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar and beat well.
- 10 Slowly add the Grand Marnier and colouring and beat until blended.
- 11 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe around the edges of the cakes and on top of the frosting, as in the photo.
- 12 Sprinkle the white frosting with a little cocoa powder. Place a chocolate disc on the orange buttercream and place a chocolate shape on each cake.





## Banoffee cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 2 very ripe bananas
- 150g (5oz) sugar
- 1 free-range egg
- 85g (3oz) butter, melted
- 175g (6oz) plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 400ml (14fl oz) double cream
- 3-4 tbsp icing sugar
- a few drops of vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

- 24 slices of banana
- dulce de leche
- yellow sugar strands
- diced vanilla fudge

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 24-hole mini muffin tin.
- 2 Beat together the bananas, sugar, egg, and melted butter in a mixing bowl. Sift in the dry ingredients and mix until smooth.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 10-15 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the topping, whisk together all the ingredients until smooth and thick. Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls on top of the cakes.
- 5 Place a banana slice on top. Drizzle with dulce de leche and sprinkle with sugar strands and diced fudge.



## Black and white cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 200ml (7fl oz) milk
- 55g (2oz) soft black liquorice, finely chopped
- 115g (4oz) unsalted butter
- 150g (5oz) caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

170g (6oz) self-raising flour

½ tsp baking powder

### TO DECORATE

- 225g (8oz) white sugarpaste
- icing sugar
- 3-4 tbsp apricot jam, warmed
- 1 tube black piping gel

- 1 For the cupcakes, heat the milk and liquorice in a pan, stirring and bring just to a boil. Remove from the heat, cover and leave to stand for about 30 minutes until the liquorice has melted.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole deep bun or muffin tin.
- 3 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy.
- 4 Beat in the eggs and vanilla until blended.
- 5 Sift in the flour and baking powder and gently fold into the mixture with the liquorice milk, until well combined.
- 6 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 To decorate, roll out the sugarpaste thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out small rounds, the same diameter as the cakes.
- 8 Brush the tops of the cakes with a little apricot jam and attach the sugarpaste rounds.
- 9 Pipe random thin lines on top with the piping gel to resemble animal print. Drag some of the lines with a cocktail stick and leave to set.



## Butterscotch pretzel cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**110g (4oz) butter**  
**110g (4oz) caster sugar**  
**2 free-range eggs, beaten**  
**110g (4oz) self-raising flour**  
**1 tsp vanilla extract**

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

**225g (8oz) unsalted butter**  
**400g (14oz) icing sugar**

a few drops of vanilla extract

### FOR THE SAUCE

**250g (9oz) caster sugar**  
**4 tbsp water**  
**150ml (5fl oz) whipping cream**  
**50g (1½oz) unsalted butter**

### TO DECORATE

**24 pretzels**

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 24-hole mini bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs until well blended. Sift in the flour and fold in gently with the vanilla, until just combined.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 10-15 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack and leave to cool completely.
- 4 For the buttercream, beat the butter until very soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar, beating until smooth, then beat in the vanilla.
- 5 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a generous swirl on the cakes.
- 6 For the butterscotch sauce, put the sugar into a heavy-based frying pan and stir in the water. Heat gently, tilting the pan (do not stir) until the sugar has dissolved.
- 7 Increase the heat and bubble for 4-5 minutes until golden brown. Remove from the heat and carefully stir in the cream and butter. Pour into a bowl and leave to cool.
- 8 Drizzle the caramel sauce over the buttercream. Dip the pretzels into the sauce and place on top of the cakes.

## Green tea cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**50ml (1¾fl oz) milk**  
**2 tsp green tea powder**  
**80g (3oz) caster sugar**  
**85g (3oz) butter**  
**2 free-range eggs**  
**125g (4½oz) plain flour**  
**2 tsp baking powder**  
**50g (1¾oz) ground almonds**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**110g (4oz) unsalted butter**  
**300g (11oz) icing sugar**  
**2 tbsp milk**  
**2 tbsp green tea powder**  
**TO DECORATE**  
**edible flowers**

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Heat the milk gently in a pan and when it starts to steam remove from the heat. Add the green tea powder and whisk well.
- 3 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs until blended.
- 4 Sift in the flour and baking powder and beat well. Stir in the ground almonds and green tea mixture until blended.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until firm to the touch and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the topping, beat the butter until very soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar and beat well.
- 7 Add the milk and green tea powder and beat until light and fluffy.
- 8 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls onto the cakes. Decorate with edible flowers.





# Deliciously *Chocolatey*

Victoria Glass celebrates all things chocolate in her book *Deliciously Chocolatey* and she shares the goodness with you here...

There is no doubting the myriad charms of chocolate. The Latin for cacao, *Theobroma*, doesn't mean 'food of the gods' for nothing. Indulgent and seductive, chocolate can cheer the darkest of days and even has the added bonus of containing multiple health benefits. Generous levels of magnesium, potassium, copper, iron, phosphorous and calcium can all be found in chocolate and research indicates that cocoa products can actually help to lower blood pressure and alleviate stress.

Sadly, this doesn't give us carte blanche to scoff chocolate pâtisserie with wild abandon, as the addition of butter, cream and sugar undoes most of its natural saintly properties. But a little of what you fancy does you good and there is still some smugness to revel in by enriching your body with nutrients you can't get from other indulgences.

There are few people who can resist the seductive powers of chocolate. The Aztec emperor, Montezuma, was said to guzzle huge quantities of cacao in order to fuel his amorous assignations. Although there is no definitive evidence that chocolate has any magical effects as an aphrodisiac, it does contain two ingredients that may be partly responsible for its sensual status: tryptophan, a building block of serotonin, a feel-good brain chemical; and phenylethylamine, a stimulant released when you fall in love.

The chocolate story begins in Mesoamerica, with evidence of the Mokaya people drinking it as far back as 1900 BC. The Mayans had cocoa plantations as early as 600 AD, but

it wasn't until the 16th century that Europe was introduced to chocolate. The Spanish explorer, Hernán Cortés, brought cacao to the Spanish court in 1519 after conquering Mexico. Montezuma himself gave Cortés a cup of spiced chocolate – a great honour indeed, considering the Aztec valued cacao so much they used it as currency. After adding sugar, the Spanish were so keen to keep their discovery a secret that the rest of Europe was left in a world devoid of chocolate for another 100 years.

Chocolate as we know it today was produced as recently as 1828, when a Dutchman named Casparus Johannes van Houten invented a process of extracting the cocoa butter and cocoa powder from the roasted bean. His son, Coenraad, a chemist, later

invented a method of alkalizing the cocoa, known as Dutch processing, which created a milder, less bitter flavour and a more easily used product. Once Casparus' patent ran out, the English company J. S. Fry & Sons produced the first modern chocolate bar in 1847. Switzerland's Daniel Peter added powdered milk to create the first milk chocolate in the mid-1870s, while Rodolphe Lindt went on to take chocolate's development further by introducing the process of conching in 1879, a manufacturing technique of scraping and mixing, resulting in a smoother, better blended product.

Chocolate is a matchless luxury and the epitome of celebration and these recipes will ensure you have all the delicious chocolate cupcakes you'll ever need to treat yourself and your loved ones, whatever the occasion.

*The Aztec emperor  
Montezuma was said to  
guzzle huge quantities of  
cacao in order to fuel his  
amorous assignations.*

# Chocolate fudge cupcakes

By Victoria Glass

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

110g (4oz) light muscovado sugar  
2 tbsp golden syrup  
55g (2oz) butter, melted  
55ml (2fl oz) sunflower oil  
2 free-range eggs, beaten  
110ml (4fl oz) milk  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
75g (2½oz) dark chocolate, melted and cooled  
130g (4½oz) self-raising flour  
20g (¾oz) cocoa powder  
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
a small pinch of salt

## FOR THE FUDGE TOPPING

125g (4½oz) soft butter  
215g (7½oz) icing sugar  
125g (4½oz) dark chocolate, melted and cooled  
a splash of milk, if needed

## FOR THE HOT CHOCOLATE CUPCAKES VARIATION

25g (1oz) dark chocolate, chopped  
25g (1oz) golden syrup  
25ml (1fl oz) double cream  
2 free-range egg whites  
65g (2½oz) caster sugar  
a pinch of cream of tartar  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
mini marshmallows, to decorate (optional)

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.

2 Whisk together the sugar, syrup, butter, oil, eggs, milk, vanilla and melted chocolate. Sift in the flour, cocoa, bicarbonate of soda and salt and fold until completely incorporated. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases. Fill the paper cases two-thirds of the way up and bake in the oven for 20 minutes, or until an inserted skewer comes out clean. Transfer the cakes onto a wire rack to cool.

3 To make the fudge topping, whisk the butter for a few seconds until pale and creamy. Sift in half of the icing sugar and whisk to combine. Add the melted chocolate and whisk through before sifting in the remaining icing sugar. Whisk for a minute or so, or until the topping is really creamy and soft. You can add a splash of milk to slightly slacken the mixture if you need to. Spoon the topping into a piping bag fitted with a star nozzle and pipe a generous swirl of buttercream on top of each cooled cake.

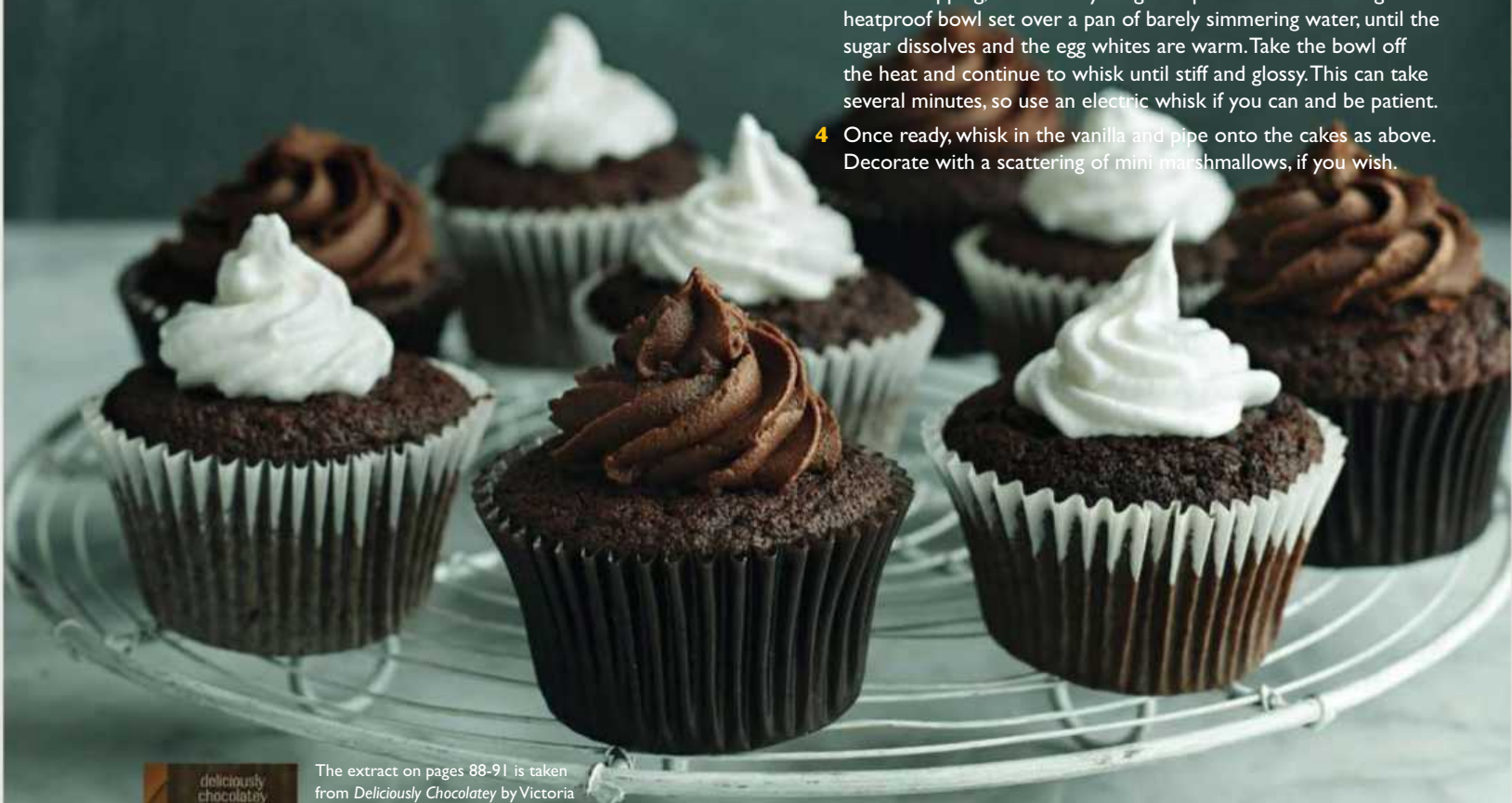
## FOR THE HOT CHOCOLATE VARIATION

1 For a hot chocolate version, bake the cupcakes (steps 1-2 above) and add a gooey filling and marshmallow topping instead of fudge.

2 For the filling, melt the chocolate, syrup and cream in a small saucepan over gentle heat, stirring all the time. Leave to cool. When the cakes are cool, cut a small cone-shaped hollow in the centre of each with a small, sharp knife and put gooey filling in.

3 For the topping, whisk everything except the vanilla in a large heatproof bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water, until the sugar dissolves and the egg whites are warm. Take the bowl off the heat and continue to whisk until stiff and glossy. This can take several minutes, so use an electric whisk if you can and be patient.

4 Once ready, whisk in the vanilla and pipe onto the cakes as above. Decorate with a scattering of mini marshmallows, if you wish.



The extract on pages 88-91 is taken from *Deliciously Chocolatey* by Victoria Glass, photography by Dan Jones, published by Ryland Peters & Small. *Deliciously Chocolatey* is available to you for the special price of £11.99 including P&P (RRP £16.99) by calling Macmillan Direct on 01256 302 699 and quoting code GLR EB8.





## Miracles

By Victoria Glass

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

130ml (4½ fl oz) milk

2 tbsp golden syrup

100g (3½ oz) light muscovado sugar

60g (2oz) butter

a pinch of bicarbonate of soda

2 free-range eggs, beaten

170g (6oz) self-raising flour

30g (1oz) cocoa powder

3 tbsp raspberry jam

12 natural glacé cherries

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

75g (2½ oz) soft butter

75g (2½ oz) dark chocolate, melted and cooled

100g (3½ oz) icing sugar

a splash of milk, if needed

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases.
- 2 Put the milk, golden syrup, sugar and butter in a large saucepan set over a medium heat and stir until melted. Take the pan off the heat and whisk in the bicarbonate of soda. The mixture will foam up slightly. Leave to cool for a few minutes before whisking in the beaten egg. Sift in the flour and cocoa, and fold in until fully incorporated.
- 3 Divide the mixture between the paper cases and bake in the preheated oven for 10-15 minutes, or until an inserted skewer comes out clean. Transfer the cakes to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 Use a small, sharp knife to cut out a small inverted cone shape from the top of each cake. Fill each cavity with jam before replacing the cut cake tops.
- 5 To make the buttercream, simply whisk the butter until very soft before adding the chocolate and whisking to combine. Sift in the icing sugar and whisk until light and fluffy. You can add a splash of milk to slightly slacken the mixture if needed.
- 6 Spoon the buttercream into a piping bag fitted with a plain nozzle and pipe a swirl of buttercream on top of each cake. Top with a glacé cherry and enjoy.



## Double chocolate chip muffins

By Victoria Glass

Makes 12

### FOR THE MUFFINS

250ml (9fl oz) buttermilk

100g (3½oz) butter, melted and cooled slightly

1 large free-range egg, beaten

200g (7oz) plain flour

50g (1¾oz) cocoa powder

1 tsp baking powder

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

200g (7oz) caster sugar

a pinch of salt

150g (5¼oz) dark or milk chocolate chips (or a mix of the two)

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases.
- 2 Whisk together the buttermilk, melted butter and egg in a large jug. Sift together the flour, cocoa and raising agents in a separate large mixing bowl and add the sugar and salt. Pour the dry ingredients into the wet and use a fork to gently combine. Do not over mix the batter. Fold in 100g (3½oz) of the chocolate chips.
- 3 Pour the batter into the paper cases, sprinkle over the remaining chocolate chips and bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, or until an inserted skewer comes out clean.
- 4 Transfer the muffins onto a wire rack to cool slightly before tucking in.



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# Fruit & Nut

CUPCAKES





## Fruit & Nut CUPCAKES



## Apple and cinnamon cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 125g (4½oz) butter
- 125g (4½oz) caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs
- 125g (4½oz) plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 apple, peeled, cored and diced

### FOR THE ICING

- 250g (9oz) icing sugar
- 2-3 tbsp hot water
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

### red food colouring

### TO DECORATE

- green sugarpaste leaves
- 6 chocolate 'twigs', broken in half

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a bowl until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Fold in the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and cinnamon until just combined. Gently stir in the apples.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until risen and golden. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl and beat in enough water to give a smooth, thick texture. Stir in the vanilla and food colouring until smooth.
- 5 Spread on the cakes and attach a leaf to each cake. Insert a chocolate 'twig' into the centre of each cake and leave to set.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

## Pumpkin chocolate chip cupcakes

By Betsy Eves from JavaCupcake  
([JavaCupcake.com](http://JavaCupcake.com))

Makes 18

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 385g (13½oz) plain flour
- 230g (8oz) sugar
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 3 free-range eggs, at room temperature
- 230g (8oz) pumpkin purée
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 60ml (2fl oz) soured cream
- 175ml (6fl oz) vegetable oil
- 350g (12oz) semi-sweet chocolate chips

### FOR THE FROSTING

- 115g (4oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 115g (4oz) cream cheese, at room temperature
- 60g (2oz) pumpkin purée
- 450g (1lb) icing sugar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp double cream
- mini chocolate chips, for garnish

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Line two cupcake tins with 18 paper cases.

- 2 In a large bowl, sift together the flour, sugar, salt, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, cinnamon and nutmeg.
- 3 In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs. Add the pumpkin purée and whisk until combined and smooth. Mix in the vanilla, soured cream and oil and whisk until combined.
- 4 Pour the wet mixture into the dry flour mixture. Gently fold together until no dry ingredients can be seen. Make sure to scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl during this process. Do not overmix!
- 5 Add the chocolate chips and fold gently two or three times to combine. Fill the cupcake cases at least two-thirds full with batter. Bake for 15-17 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.
- 6 Cool in the tins for 3-5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

### FOR THE FROSTING

- 1 In the bowl of your stand mixer with the paddle attachment fitted, cream the butter until smooth. Add the cream cheese and mix again until smooth. Scrape the sides of the bowl.
- 2 Add the pumpkin purée and then beat for 1 minute.
- 3 One cup at a time, add the icing sugar, mixing until smooth after each addition.
- 4 Mix in the cinnamon, nutmeg, double cream and vanilla.
- 5 Beat on high for 1-2 minutes or until well combined, smooth and fluffy.

### ASSEMBLY

- 1 Using a Wilton 1M tip fitted on a piping bag, pipe swirls of frosting onto each cupcake.
- 2 Garnish with mini chocolate chips.

# Berry cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 125g (4½oz) butter**
- 140g (5oz) caster sugar**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 2 free-range eggs**
- 300g (11oz) self-raising flour**
- 125ml (4½fl oz) apple juice**
- 200g (7oz) mixed strawberries and raspberries, finely chopped**
- a few drops of pink food colouring**

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 175g (6oz) unsalted butter**
- 300g (11oz) icing sugar**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Beat the butter, sugar and vanilla in a mixing bowl until light.
- 3** Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Fold in the flour and apple juice until just combined, then stir in the berries and food colouring until they are evenly blended.
- 4** Bake for 20-25 minutes until risen and firm to the touch. Leave them to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the buttercream, beat the butter until soft. Sift in the icing sugar and beat well until smooth and creamy. Stir in the vanilla.
- 6** Spread the buttercream on the centre of the cakes.

Recipe © Stockfood, photography © iStock Photo



# Chocolate blueberry cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 200g (7oz) plain flour**
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder**
- 1 tbsp baking powder**
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar**
- 2 free-range eggs**
- 100ml (3½fl oz) sunflower oil**
- 225ml (8fl oz) milk**
- ½ tsp vanilla extract**

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 175g (6oz) unsalted butter**
- 350g (12oz) icing sugar**
- 225g (8oz) mascarpone**
- 55g (2oz) blueberries**
- blue food colouring paste, or gel**

## TO DECORATE

- chocolate sugar strands**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Sift the flour, cocoa and baking powder into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar.
- 3** Whisk together the eggs and oil in a separate bowl until frothy, then slowly whisk in the milk and vanilla. Stir into the dry ingredients until just blended.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until they are risen and springy to the touch. Leave to cool in the tin for about 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the buttercream, beat the butter until soft, then sift in the icing sugar. Gradually beat in the mascarpone until the mixture is smooth and creamy.
- 6** Press the blueberries through a sieve and into the mixture and beat well, then beat in the colouring.
- 7** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cake.
- 8** Sprinkle with chocolate sugar strands.

Recipe and photography © Stockfood







## Cranberry and cherry cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 175g (6oz) plain flour**
- 2 tsp baking powder**
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon**
- 110g (4oz) sugar**
- ¼ tsp salt**
- 110ml (4fl oz) milk**
- 110ml (4fl oz) sunflower oil**
- 1 free-range egg**
- 1½ tsp honey**
- 150g (5oz) dried cranberries and cherries, mixed**

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 170g (6oz) unsalted butter**
- 400-500g (14-18oz) icing sugar**
- 170ml (6fl oz) crème fraîche**
- pink food colouring paste**

### TO DECORATE

- dried cranberries**
- dried cherries**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Sift the flour, baking powder and cinnamon into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar and salt.
- 3** Whisk together the milk, oil, egg and honey and add to the dry ingredients, mixing until they are just combined. Stir in the cranberries and cherries.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes, until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the buttercream, beat the butter until soft and creamy.
- 6** Sift in the icing sugar alternately with the crème fraîche and beat well until thick and creamy. Stir in a little pink food colouring. Chill until firm enough to spread.
- 7** Spread on top of the cakes and decorate with cranberries and cherries.

## Elderflower cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) butter**
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar**
- 55g (2oz) ground almonds**
- 2 tbsp elderflower cordial**
- 2 large free-range eggs, beaten**
- 80g (3oz) self-raising flour**

### FOR THE LEMON BUTTERCREAM

- 225g (8oz) unsalted butter**
- 400g (14oz) icing sugar**
- 1 tsp lemon juice**
- 5 tsp elderflower cordial**
- sugarpaste flowers (optional)**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2** Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Stir in the ground almonds and elderflower cordial.
- 3** Beat in the eggs until blended, then stir in the flour until combined.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 15-20 minutes until risen and firm to the touch. Remove from the tin and place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the buttercream, beat the butter until very soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar, beating until smooth. Add the lemon juice and cordial slowly, beating constantly until they are blended.
- 6** Spoon into a piping bag with a fine flower petal tip.
- 7** Pipe onto the cakes to cover completely, then decorate with tiny sugarpaste flowers, if desired.



# Key lime cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

80g (3oz) butter, melted

1 free-range egg

175ml (6fl oz) plain yoghurt

juice and zest of 1 unwaxed lime

250g (9oz) plain flour

1 tbsp baking powder

150g (5oz) sugar

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

150g (5oz) white chocolate

120g (4oz) unsalted butter

180g (6oz) icing sugar

6 tsp lime juice

a few drops of green food colouring

## TO DECORATE

1 tube of green piping gel

yellow sugar strands and sugar crystals

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Mix the butter, egg, yoghurt, lime juice and zest in a mixing bowl. Sift in the flour, baking powder and sugar. Stir until just combined.
- 3 Spoon the mixture into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the buttercream, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat.
- 5 Beat the butter until soft and creamy. Sift in the sugar and beat well. Beat in the juice until thick and creamy. Stir in the chocolate and green food colouring until blended.
- 6 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on the cakes. Pipe around the swirls with green gel. Sprinkle with sugar strands and crystals.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

# Mandarin marmalade cupcakes

Makes 24

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

110g (4oz) butter

110g (4oz) caster sugar

2 free-range eggs, beaten

115g (4oz) self-raising flour

a pinch of salt

finely grated zest of 2 unwaxed mandarin oranges

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

112g (4oz) unsalted butter

1 tbsp mandarin marmalade

1½ tsp grated orange zest

250g (9oz) icing sugar

2-3 tbsp mandarin juice

## TO DECORATE

2-3 mandarins, segmented

130g (4½oz) sugar

160ml (6fl oz) water

mandarin zest, finely chopped

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until pale and fluffy.
- 3 Gradually beat in the eggs, beating until fully incorporated into the mixture. Fold in the flour, salt and mandarin zest until blended.
- 4 Spoon the mix into the cases and bake for 15-20 minutes, until golden and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes and then on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the buttercream, beat together the butter, marmalade and zest until creamy.
- 6 Gradually sift in the icing sugar, beating until combined. Gradually add the orange juice, beating until thick and fluffy.
- 7 Spoon into a piping bag with a leaf tip and pipe two rows on each cake.
- 8 To decorate, put the mandarin segments in a pan with the sugar and water and heat until the sugar dissolves. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 10 minutes, until tender and translucent. Leave to cool completely.
- 9 Place the segments into the centre of each cake and sprinkle with chopped zest.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood







## Passion fruit cupcakes

Makes 12-15

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 175g (6oz) unsalted butter**
- 175g (6oz) sugar**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 3 free-range eggs**
- 125g (4½oz) mascarpone**
- 60ml (2fl oz) passion fruit pulp**
- 125g (4½oz) self-raising flour**
- 30g (1oz) plain flour**
- 60ml (2fl oz) milk**
- FOR THE TOPPING**
- 250g (9oz) mascarpone**
- 50ml (1¾fl oz) double cream**
- 3 tbsp icing sugar**
- 2-3 passion fruit, seeds and pulp**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in 12-15 holes of a muffin tin.
- 2** Beat the butter, sugar and vanilla in a bowl until light and creamy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- 3** Add the mascarpone and the passion fruit pulp (including pips) and beat until smooth.
- 4** Stir in both flours alternately with the milk until smooth.
- 5** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until they are golden and springy to the touch. Leave to cool in the tins for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6** For the topping, whisk together the mascarpone, cream and icing sugar in a bowl until thick.
- 7** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls on top of the cakes. Sprinkle with passion fruit seeds and pulp.

## Peach Melba cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 100g (3½oz) butter**
- 150g (5oz) caster sugar**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten**
- 200g (7oz) self-raising flour**
- 1 tsp baking powder**
- 125ml (4½fl oz) milk**
- 75g (2½oz) peach flesh, chopped**
- 55g (2oz) raspberries**

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 350ml (12fl oz) double cream**
- 2-3 tbsp icing sugar**
- 2-3 tbsp raspberry liqueur**

### TO DECORATE

- 12 raspberries**
- 12 peach slices**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2** Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the vanilla and eggs until blended.
- 3** Sift in the flour and baking powder and beat well. Stir in the milk and peaches until blended. Gently stir in the raspberries.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the topping, whisk together all the ingredients until smooth and thick.
- 6** Spread on top of the cupcakes. Place a raspberry and a peach slice on each cake.



# Pomegranate cupcakes

Makes 24

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) butter
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- 110g (4oz) self-raising flour
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

## FOR THE COCONUT BUTTERCREAM

- 110g (4oz) unsalted butter
- 280g (10oz) icing sugar
- 3-4 tbsp coconut cream
- 1 pomegranate, seeds

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 24-hole mini cupcake tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs until they are well blended.
- 3 Sift in the flour and fold in gently with the vanilla, until just combined.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 10-15 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack and leave to cool completely.
- 5 For the coconut buttercream, beat the butter until soft. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth, then beat in the coconut cream until smooth and blended.
- 6 Spread the buttercream on top of the cakes and decorate with pomegranate seeds.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

# Rum and raisin cupcakes

Makes 12

- 150g (5oz) raisins
- 3 tbsp dark rum
- 110g (4oz) self-raising flour
- 20g (¾oz) cocoa powder
- 20g (¾oz) cornflour
- 150g (5oz) caster sugar
- 150g (5oz) butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 free-range eggs
- 30ml (1fl oz) milk

## FOR THE CREAM TOPPING

- 300ml (11fl oz) double cream
- 2 tbsp icing sugar

- 1 Soak the raisins in the rum overnight.
- 2 Set aside about 30g (1 oz) of soaked raisins and the liquid for the decoration.
- 3 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 4 Sift together the flour, cocoa and cornflour and set aside.
- 5 Beat together the sugar, butter and vanilla in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy.
- 6 Add one egg, a third of the flour mixture and a little milk and beat until just combined. Repeat until all the ingredients are combined. Fold in the soaked raisins.
- 7 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until risen. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 8 For the cream topping; whisk together the cream and icing sugar until thick enough to pipe. Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cake. Decorate with the reserved raisins and drizzle with the reserved liquid.

Recipe and photography © Stockfood





# How to...

## GET CREATIVE WITH COLOUR WHEN PIPING BUTTERCREAM

Buttercream is easy to make and use as a filling or plain coating, but it can do much more. You don't have to reach for the royal icing and lots of tools to get beautiful results to top a cupcake, just follow the steps in our masterclass...



### Colour block buttercream

**a batch of buttercream – made from 225g (8oz) butter, 450g (1lb) icing sugar, 2 tbsp milk**  
**pink food colour paste**  
**disposable piping bag**  
**star nozzle**

- 1** Take half the buttercream and colour it with your chosen colour; we have used claret.
- 2** Open the piping bag and insert the nozzle.
- 3** Fill one side of the bag with the natural buttercream and carefully spread down the bag to the nozzle. Using a palette knife, push the icing downward to keep it to its half. Then place the coloured buttercream on top and carefully squeeze the bag down, squeezing out the excess icing until both colours come through. You are now ready to pipe.
- 4** To decorate a cupcake like ours pictured, pipe from the middle outwards, then build up a second circle on top, working back towards the middle. Finish in the centre with a push down.
- 5** Colour block buttercream looks really effective when piped in a swirl.





## Two-tone edged buttercream roses

paintbrush

Wilton 1M nozzle or equivalent

a disposable piping bag

palette knife

claret food colour paste

buttercream

1 clean bowl

- 1 Place the nozzle into the piping bag and, using a food paintbrush, paint the inside of the bag with the food colour paste, fold the bag over and do a little at a time. Once you are happy with the covering, flatten and squeeze upwards to spread the colouring in the bag. Continue until three-quarters of the piping bag is coated.
- 2 Drop the natural coloured buttercream into the centre of the bag up to the food colour line and gently squeeze down the bag. Squeeze out the excess until the colour starts to come through. You are now ready to pipe.
- 3 To pipe a rose, squeeze down gently in the centre of your cupcake to release a flower effect, then overlap this working in an outward circle, overlapping every circle, until you reach the edge of the cake, where you gently push down to finish.
- 4 If the bag needs refilling, start over from step 1 again.
- 5 Two-tone colour edged icing will give you beautiful roses, with a deeper outside edge, making stunning cupcakes with a professional finish... great to give as gifts!





ON SALE  
3 DEC

# Baking

## HEAVEN

### Next issue

### Winter warmers

As the weather gets colder,  
indulge in some comfort baking  
with delicious warming desserts

#### **MARSHMALLOWS CAKE POPS**

Find out how to use these trendy treats in your baking! Discover the do's and don'ts of baking cake pops

**Meet the inspiration behind the  
Primrose Bakery**

**How to... bake the perfect meringue**



# Lighter bakes

CUPCAKES







## Flourless raspberry cupcakes

By Cherie Bevan and Tass Tauroa

Makes 15-16

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

softened butter, for greasing

cocoa powder, for dusting

320g (1 1/4oz) unsalted butter, chopped

400g (14oz) dark chocolate, chopped

10 free-range eggs, at room temperature, separated

330g (1 1/4oz) caster sugar

325g (1 1/2oz) ground almonds

500g (1lb 2oz) fresh raspberries

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Lightly grease 16 dariole moulds (250ml (9fl oz)) with softened butter and dust with cocoa powder or place 16 paper cases into standard muffin tins.
- 2 In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over low heat, then add the chocolate and stir until melted. Keep warm.
- 3 Use an electric mixer with a whisk attachment to whisk the egg whites until stiff, but not dry, peaks form. Sprinkle 110g (3 3/4oz) of the caster sugar over the egg whites and fold in. Set aside.
- 4 Mix the ground almonds, egg yolks and remaining sugar into the butter and chocolate mixture. Gently fold through the egg whites.
- 5 Spoon the mixture evenly between the moulds, filling to three-quarters, then place 3-4 raspberries on top of each. Bake for 25-30 minutes until risen and firm. Leave to cool in the moulds before turning out.
- 6 These cupcakes will keep for 2-3 days in an airtight container. They can also be frozen for up to 1 month. Defrost before serving.

## Morning glory cupcakes

By Cherie Bevan and Tass Tauroa

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

170g (6oz) raisins

200g (7oz) bran flakes

300ml (10 1/2fl oz) milk

420g (14 3/4oz) soured cream

2 free-range eggs,  
lightly beaten

2 ripe bananas, mashed

50g (1 3/4oz) hulled millet

40g (1 1/2oz) linseeds (flaxseeds)

30g (1oz) sunflower seeds

100g (3 1/2oz) light brown sugar

2 tbsp molasses

335g (11 3/4oz) plain flour

2 tsp baking powder

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tsp salt

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Lightly grease and line a 12-hole standard 250ml (9fl oz) muffin tin with paper cases.
- 2 In a small bowl, cover the raisins with hot water and set aside for 30 minutes to plump up.
- 3 In a medium bowl, mix the bran flakes, milk, soured cream, eggs and banana until well combined. Let stand for 25-30 minutes.
- 4 In another bowl, mix together the millet, linseed and sunflower seeds, and set these aside.
- 5 Add the brown sugar and molasses to the bran mixture and stir until well combined. Drain the plumped up raisins, add to the bran mixture and stir.
- 6 Sift together the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Gently fold into the wet ingredients until just combined. Spoon into the prepared tin, filling to the rim. Sprinkle over the seed mix.
- 7 Bake for 35-40 minutes until golden brown and the cake tops spring back when pressed in the middle. Cool in the tin before turning out.



## Granola breakfast cupcakes

By Jemma Lloyd from Iced Jems ([www.icedjems.com](http://www.icedjems.com))

*Makes 10*

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**115g (4oz) caster sugar**

**115g (4oz) butter (I used Vitalite so the recipe is dairy-free)**

**2 medium free-range eggs**

**115g (4oz) self-raising flour**

**1 apple, peeled, cored and cubed**

**115g (4oz) Jordans' Super Fruity Granola**

- 1 Preheat your oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 Cream together your butter and sugar, then add the eggs and mix well until you have a thick batter.
- 3 Pour in the flour and the apple cubes and mix again until they are well combined.
- 4 Finally, pour in half of your granola and mix a final time until the granola is evenly distributed within the batter.
- 5 Place 10 baking cups on a baking tray or within a muffin tray and place heaped spoonfuls of the mixture into each cup.
- 6 Sprinkle each cake with the remaining granola, so there is a layer completely covering the top. Transfer to the oven and cook for about 18 minutes or until the cake tops spring back when pressed. Remove from the oven and place on a wire rack to cool.



## Gluten-free cupcakes topped with chocolate

Makes 6

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 90g (3oz) white rice flour
- 30g (1oz) potato starch flour
- 20g (¾oz) tapioca flour
- ¼ tsp xanthan gum
- ½ tsp gluten-free baking powder
- ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 55g (2oz) unsalted butter
- 75g (2½oz) coconut palm sugar
- 1 large free-range egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 80ml (3fl oz) low fat buttermilk, more if needed

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 260ml (9fl oz) coconut cream
- 1 tbsp rice malt syrup
- ½ tsp vanilla powder
- 220g (8oz) plain chocolate, chopped
- powdered xylitol

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place six paper cases in a muffin tin.
- 2 Stir together the flours, xanthan gum, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Set aside.
- 3 Beat the butter in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Add the sugar, then the eggs and vanilla and beat until well combined.
- 4 Add the dry ingredients, alternately with the buttermilk, beginning and ending with the dry ingredients. The mixture should be thick and fluffy.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the topping, heat the coconut cream, rice malt syrup and vanilla powder in a pan to a simmer.
- 7 Pour into a bowl and add the chocolate, whisking until smooth and melted. Cover and chill until firm enough to pipe.
- 8 Spoon into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe a swirl on each cake. Sprinkle with powdered xylitol.

**TIP** For powdered xylitol: place the xylitol in a food processor and blend to a powder.



## Kiwi cupcakes

Makes 6

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

55g (2oz) coconut palm sugar

110g (4oz) plain flour

a pinch of salt

½ tbsp baking powder

¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda

½ tsp ground cinnamon

88ml (3fl oz) low-fat

plain yoghurt

3 tbsp semi-skimmed milk

1 ½ tbsp sunflower oil

1 small free-range egg, beaten

½ tsp vanilla extract

1 ripe banana, mashed

1 ripe kiwi fruit, diced

### FOR THE TOPPING

225ml (8fl oz) thick

Greek yoghurt

a few drops of stevia

1 tsp vanilla extract

green food colouring paste

### TO DECORATE

green sparkling sugar

6 kiwi fruit slices

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place six paper cases in a muffin tin.
- 2 Sift the dry ingredients into a mixing bowl and set aside.
- 3 Beat together the yoghurt, milk, oil, egg, vanilla and mashed banana until well combined.
- 4 Add to the dry mixture and mix until only just combined. Stir in the chopped kiwi fruit.
- 5 Put into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes, until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the topping, whisk together the yoghurt, stevia and vanilla until thick. Stir in the food colouring. Cover and chill for 1 hour.
- 7 Spread thickly on top of the cakes and sprinkle with sparkling sugar if desired. Place a kiwi fruit slice on each cake.



## Redcurrant cupcakes

Makes 6

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

150g (5oz) plain flour

75g (2½oz) coconut

palm sugar

½ tbsp baking powder

1 free-range egg

2 tbsp butter, melted

125ml (4½fl oz)

semi-skimmed milk

50g (1¾oz) redcurrants

### FOR THE TOPPING

250ml (9fl oz) thick

Greek yoghurt

a few drops of stevia

1 tsp vanilla extract

pink food colouring paste

1-2 tbsp redcurrants, crushed

### TO DECORATE

redcurrants

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease six holes of a muffin tin.
- 2 Stir together the flour, sugar and baking powder in a mixing bowl.
- 3 Beat together the egg, butter and milk until just blended.
- 4 Stir into the dry ingredients until just combined.
- 5 Put into the tins and sprinkle with the redcurrants, gently pressing them into the mixture.
- 6 Bake for 20-25 minutes, until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 For the topping, whisk together the yoghurt, stevia and vanilla until thick. Stir in the food colouring and redcurrants. Cover and chill for 1 hour.
- 8 Spread thickly on top of the cakes and decorate with redcurrants.



# Surprise *insides!*

Want to discover how to surprise and delight in new ways with your cupcakes? Candice Clayton shows us how to make three bakes with hidden centres – warning, these can get addictive!



The recipes on pages 108-112 are taken from *Surprise Cakes & Cupcakes* by Candice Clayton, published by New Holland Publishers, RRP £16.99.



# Circus cupcakes

By Candice Clayton

## FOR THE WHITE CHOCOLATE BATTER

**270g (9½oz) butter, at room temperature**  
**300g (10½oz) white chocolate**  
**470g (16½oz) caster sugar**  
**250ml (9fl oz) milk**  
**260g (9¼oz) self-raising flour**  
**300g (10½oz) plain flour**  
**4 free-range eggs**

## FOR THE CHOCOLATE BATTER

**250g (9oz) butter, at room temperature**  
**250g (9oz) compound chocolate**  
**470g (16½oz) caster sugar**  
**120ml (4fl oz) milk, plus extra if needed**  
**60g (2oz) unsweetened cocoa powder**  
**150g (5oz) self-raising flour**  
**150g (5oz) plain flour**  
**100ml (3½fl oz) oil**  
**4 free-range eggs**

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

**gel food colours – blue, green, red, orange and yellow**  
**royal icing or buttercream**

## FOR THE WHITE CHOCOLATE BATTER

- 1 Melt the butter in a saucepan over low heat. Add the chocolate, sugar and milk and stir constantly until the chocolate has also melted and the ingredients combined. Transfer to a separate bowl to cool.
- 2 When the chocolate mix has returned to room temperature, place it into a mixer bowl and sift in the flour, placing it on top of the liquid and mix on low speed until just combined. Add the eggs to the mix, one at a time, on low speed until clear. Mix on high speed for 2 minutes.

## FOR THE CAKE BALLS

- 1 Mix up one batch of white chocolate batter and divide equally into four bowls, using scales to ensure the batches are even. Colour the batter with your choice of bright gel food colours. White chocolate mud cake is a creamy yellow colour, so a light, bright blue colouring will turn teal green when mixed into the batter. I prefer to use royal blue; it has a weighty base and will turn the batter darker blue.
- 2 Flavour alert – Because the cake balls are so different in colour I wanted to give them a distinct taste too. I flavoured my cake ball batter with marshmallow.
- 3 Preheat the oven to 150°C/Gas Mark 2. Grease both sides of a cake ball tray with cake release agent or vegetable oil.
- 4 Spoon the batter into the base tray. I make one colour at a time to avoid dropping one colour into another.
- 5 Cook for 17-20 minutes. As a general rule the batter should come out of the top of the cake ball tray a little or at least be visible and when you put a skewer in it, the skewer should come out clean. I always sacrifice one cake ball from the centre of the tray to cut open and check – this also means you get to eat it!
- 6 Once you have cooked all the batter and allowed the cake balls to cool to room temperature, wrap them in clingfilm and foil and freeze them.

## FOR THE CHOCOLATE BATTER

- 1 Melt the butter in a saucepan over a low heat. Add the chocolate and sugar and stir constantly until the chocolate also melts. Add the milk, stirring until the ingredients combine. Transfer to a bowl to cool.
- 2 When the chocolate mix is at room temperature, place in your mixer bowl

and sift in the cocoa and flours, placing it on top of the liquid and mix on low speed until just combined. Add the oil and eggs to the mix, combine on low speed and mix on high speed for 3-4 minutes.

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 Preheat the oven to 120-130°C/Gas Mark ½. Line a cupcake tray with paper cases.
- 2 Make the chocolate batter. Divide about a tenth of the batter between the cases. This is to stop the cake ball rolling away from the case centre. Add one frozen cake ball to each cupcake case, pushing them firmly to the base of the liner. They will rise and we don't want them to rise too much. Once the cake balls are in place, pipe the rest of the batter into the cupcake case around the cake ball. The batter will not cover the cake ball. Once the batter is in, smooth some of the batter over the top of the frozen cake ball with a spatula or knife – slightly dampen it to avoid batter sticking to it. This creates a join between the batter and the ball top and should guide the direction of the rising batter, helping keep the frozen ball down.
- 3 Put in the oven right away. Bake for 25-35 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean.
- 4 Once the cupcakes have completely cooled, pipe royal icing (or buttercream) in a spiral motion using a 1M nozzle or similar. For these cupcakes I wanted a soft ice cream look rather than a stiff swirl, so when I beat my royal icing I stopped when it formed a peak that slowly folded over. If you want icing that swirls up and stays up, beat your royal icing until peaks form that stay upright. I also flavoured my icing with cotton candy.
- 5 Add brightly coloured stars. You can purchase these or make them in advance with gum paste and a star cutter.







## Adult jelly shot cupcakes

in several additions, to the fat, emulsifying well between each addition.

**2** Add the flours (sifted together), milk powder and baking powder and blend until smooth and free of lumps – do not over mix. Stream in the water on a low speed and mix until free of lumps.

### MAKING THE JELLY

**1** I used my favourite packet jelly mix for this recipe. Most packet mixes call for boiling water to dissolve the gelatine crystals, then once it starts to cool, the addition of cool/cold water before being put in the refrigerator to set. Instead of the cool water component I simply add alcohol instead. If you are making your jelly from scratch, you can simply follow this step at the point you add the cold liquid component. Take care calculating how much alcohol ends up in each cupcake, this can be hard to gauge.

### MAKING THE CUPCAKES

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a cupcake tray with cupcake cases.
- 2** Fill the cupcake cases three-quarters full with the sponge cake batter and bake for about 20 minutes, or until cooked through. The cakes are ready when a skewer comes out clean.
- 3** Allow to cool, then refrigerate to chill, as it is always easier to cut a cold cake.
- 4** Using an apple corer, core out the centre of the cupcake (pic 1). Carefully remove the

cored piece of cake and set it aside on a plate. Repeat for all of the cupcakes.

- 5** Using a spoon, scoop your jelly into a piping bag with a rounded tip in it. I don't break up the jelly much before putting it in the piping bag, because it breaks down as it is piped. I try and keep the breaking down to a minimum, to reduce the chances of it dissolving into the cake, which would lack the same texture, colour and effect. Fill the core with jelly by inserting the tip as far as you can, without putting pressure on the cupcake top and pipe it in (pic 2). Stop before the jelly protrudes from the top.
- 6** After the jelly has been piped, cut a small piece off the top of the core you removed earlier and stick it back into the cupcake to seal the jelly and protect it from the frosting. Jelly starts to dissolve at room temperature, so get the cakes back into the refrigerator as soon as you can and bring them out when you are ready to serve.

### DECORATING THE CUPCAKES

**1** I always consider the need for refrigeration when choosing frosting options: royal icing will go very hard and fondant will be wet and waxy, so neither of these are good choices for this sort of cupcake. Consider a dusting of icing sugar to allow the cake and jelly flavours dominate, or just a small cover of thin icing/buttercream. If you want to go big, as I have with the purple swirl (pic 3), make chocolate buttercream and colour it with regal purple. You can even add 5-15ml of a flavoured liquor (if it goes too runny, add more icing sugar as needed) and pipe it on with a 1M piping nozzle or similar:

By Candice Clayton  
**FOR THE SPONGE CAKE BATTER**

**390g (14oz) caster sugar**

**230g (8oz) unsalted butter**

**5 free-range eggs**

**250g (9oz) self-raising flour**

**150g (5oz) plain flour**

**1 ½ tsp baking powder**

**1 tbsp skimmed milk powder**

**150ml (5fl oz) water**

**vanilla essence, to taste**

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**frosting of your choice (I used chocolate buttercream)**

**1 pack of jelly crystals**

**200ml (7fl oz) alcohol of your choice**

### FOR THE SPONGE CAKE BATTER

**1** Mix the butter with the sugar until light and white. Gradually add the egg and essence,







By Candice Clayton

**1 batch sponge cake batter (page 110)**

**green teabag**

**mascarpone cream**

**pistachio food flavour or paste**

**white fondant**

**pastry cutter (circle with scalloped edges)**

**a small amount of green buttercream or ganache**

**gum paste**

**gel food colourings – soft pink for the rose, avocado and mint green for the sponge cake batter**

### MAKING THE CUPCAKES

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a cupcake tray with cupcake cases.
- 2 Make one batch of sponge cake batter, including the green food colouring. To infuse the green tea in the cake, put the green teabag in a pan with the milk required for the sponge batter: Heat the milk to 80°C, stirring constantly. Once it reaches this temperature, remove from the heat source and continue to stir. Allow to cool and use when cold. (Add 1 tsp of rose water to



## Green tea and pistachio cupcakes

your sponge cake batter instead of green tea and add cranberries to the mascarpone for a tart taste or raspberries/strawberries for a sweet taste. If you do this, use pink gel food colour in your batter instead of green.)

- 3 Three-quarters fill the cupcake cases. Bake for 17-20 minutes, or until a skewer pushed into the cake centre comes out clean.
- 4 Allow to cool, then refrigerate to chill.
- 5 Using an apple corer, remove the centre of each cupcake carefully and set it aside for later. Repeat this for all of the cupcakes. For the filling, flavour a small amount of mascarpone cream with pistachio paste/flavouring. Part fill a piping bag and pipe the pistachio mascarpone cream into the core of the cupcake by inserting the tip as far as you can without putting pressure on the top of the cupcake. Stop before the mascarpone cream protrudes from the top.
- 6 Trim a small piece of the cake core from the top and use this to plug the top of the hole in the cake. (Optional step.)
- 7 Place a dollop of green buttercream or ganache on top of the cupcake (pic 1), so that the rose decoration will be held securely. You will need to keep these cupcakes in the refrigerator before and after decorating.

### DECORATING THE CUPCAKES

- 1 Roll out the white fondant quite thin. Using the scalloped edge of a round pastry cutter, cut out one circle for each cupcake. Choose a scalloped circle cutter slightly smaller than the top of the cupcake. I do this step in advance, so the circle has time to stiffen. If you are in a hot or humid climate, add a small amount of CMC powder.
- 2 Make the roses and allow them the same

time to dry as the white fondant discs. I use gum paste for these. Make a long thin sausage of gum paste and use your rolling pin to roll it out flat, so you have one long, thin, flat, elliptical shape. With your fingers, gently start to roll one end of the flat elliptical shape to create the start of a spiral; you want the inside of the spiral, or rose centre, to be going downward not sticking out. Once you have made a good start on the spiral, pick it up with clean, dry, cornflour-dusted fingers, holding it in one hand, then use your other hand to gently wrap the rest of the gum paste around the spiral, now working upward, not recessing the spiral. When you hold the gum paste tail out away from the spiral, push and bend it back in and make waves in it. Secure it with sugar glue at regular intervals and keep going all the way around – this will start to look like many rose petals. When you have run out of gum paste or reached the desired size, cut away the excess and finish it by securing the tail end underneath the rose. Start to pull slightly on the peaks of the rose petals, bending them outward a little to make them more lifelike.

- 3 Place one white fondant disc on top of each cupcake. Apply a small amount of green buttercream or ganache to the centre of the disc. This will act as a glue to secure the rose and also give the impression of green leaves. Place one rose in the centre of each of your cupcakes (pic 2).





By Candice Clayton

**1 batch of chocolate batter (page 109)**

**white chocolate ganache**

**food flavouring – I have used salted  
caramel, butterscotch and coffee**

**black fondant**

**edible gold paint or dust and  
rose spirit**

## High tea cupcakes

### MAKING THE CUPCAKES

**1** Preheat the oven to 120-130°C/Gas Mark ½.

**2** Line a cupcake tray with cupcake cases. Fill each case three-quarters full with batter.

**3** Bake for 25-35 minutes, or until a skewer comes out clean when inserted

into the centre. Keep an eye on your cupcakes and be flexible with the time – depending on your oven, the type of chocolate you used or a different recipe, the cooking time may vary.

**4** Allow to cool, then refrigerate until cold.

**5** Using an apple corer, remove the centre of each cupcake.

**6** Divide the white chocolate ganache evenly between three bowls. Before flavouring ganache I like to warm it up, so it becomes a little closer to soup consistency. The heat and the liquidity help the flavour to disperse through the ganache easily and more evenly. You can do this ahead of time, because you need this ganache to be at normal consistency when you pipe it into the cupcakes.

**7** To add the colour and flavour to your ganache, measure it out as required and then stir with a teaspoon. You can use a whisk, but this will add more air to the ganache and may cause air pockets in your piping later.

**8** Flavour the colour ganache as desired and allow it to cool back to a peanut butter consistency, then part fill a piping bag with

one ganache flavour. Pipe the ganache into the core of the cupcake by inserting the tip as far as you can, without putting pressure on the top of the cupcake. Once it is full, apply a small amount of ganache to the top of the cupcake and smooth it over the top evenly with a crank handled spatula or knife.

### DECORATING THE CUPCAKES

**1** Roll out the black fondant about 4mm thick. Use a circle cutter that is big enough to fit over your entire cupcake. This allows for depth as well as diameter. If you don't have big circle cutters, you can use an egg ring, they work for smaller cupcakes when you're caught out. Using the right sized circle cutter, cut out your black fondant topper and lay it over the top of the cupcake. Using clean dry hands, smooth out the topper. You may also use an acetate square if you have it, this will give a nice shiny smooth finish. Smooth down the sides so they cover and tuck under the edges of the cupcake. Do this for all of the cupcakes.

**2** Prepare the gold paint for use with the dust and rose spirit.

**3** Place a stencil (pic 1) over the cupcake and hold in place with your hand. Paint over the stencil with the gold paint on a paintbrush with your other hand. Try and do this with as few strokes as possible and always work in just one direction. Gently remove the stencil, either by picking it directly up or peeling it back slowly. Repeat for each cupcake, washing/cleaning the back of the stencil between each use if required.



# Basic vanilla cupcakes

By Trudy Mitchell from JellyCake ([www.jellycake.co.uk](http://www.jellycake.co.uk))

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

**150g (5½oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**150g (5½oz) caster sugar**

**½ tsp vanilla extract**

**3 large free-range eggs**

**150g (5½oz) self-raising flour**

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

**150g (5½oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**300g (11oz) icing sugar**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4, and line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases. Place the butter, sugar and vanilla in a mixing bowl. Beat the mixture by hand or using an electric hand whisk until it becomes very light and fluffy.
- 2** Lightly beat the eggs in a jug, then slowly add to the mix, with the mixer on medium speed, beating well between each addition. If the mixture starts to curdle, add a spoonful of the flour.
- 3** Sift the flour into the bowl, then fold in using a metal spoon until just combined.
- 4** Evenly spoon or scoop the mixture into the paper cases. Bake the cupcakes in the oven for approximately 18-20 minutes, until the sponge springs back when touched and a skewer inserted into the centre of one of the cupcakes comes out clean.
- 5** Remove the tin from the oven. Leave the cupcakes to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6** To make the buttercream, place the softened butter, icing sugar and vanilla together in a bowl and mix together slowly using an electric whisk. Once the ingredients are starting to combine, turn up the speed and beat until very light and fluffy.
- 7** Using a nozzle and piping bag of your choice, fold the top of the piping bag down over your hand and carefully spoon the buttercream into the bag.
- 8** Pipe swirls of buttercream onto the top of each cupcake. For smooth iced cupcakes, you don't need a piping bag – simply spoon a little buttercream on top of the cupcake and smooth over using a spatula.

**TIP** To make chocolate cupcakes, substitute 25g (1oz) cocoa powder for an equal quantity of flour. To make chocolate buttercream, substitute 25g (1oz) cocoa powder for an equal quantity of icing sugar.





# BAKED BY YOU



**Katrina McBlain from Stevenston, Scotland**

"I baked these cupcakes as an entry into the local flower show and won 1st place."



**Nicola Zakrzewski from Filey, North Yorkshire**

"I made these cupcakes for a baby shower along with a pregnant bump cake. All made with sugarpaste."



**Alison Smith, Isle of Wight**

"I've been busy baking and thought I would share these with you. They are my version of the chocolate advocaat cupcakes in a recent issue of *Cupcake Heaven*. They tasted absolutely divine!"



**Cherri Honeybun from Somerset**

"I made these for my uncle's 70th birthday. He owns a fruit and veg shop, so when I saw the "How does your garden grow" design in *Cupcake Heaven* I was inspired!"

## STAR BAKER!

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**Debbie Carter from Clacton on Sea, Essex**

"I made these for a friend, as her husband is fanatical about cricket. The decorations covered a decadent chocolate sponge cake, with white chocolate filling."

## SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!

If you'd like us to feature your cupcakes in the Baked By You section of the next *Cupcake Heaven*, just send your high-resolution photos to [cupcakeheaven@anthem-publishing.com](mailto:cupcakeheaven@anthem-publishing.com). Please include your name, home town and a little bit about the cupcakes you've made.



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